NUARY 17 — 23, 1981

RS. 2

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INTERNATIONAL YEAR O
DISABLED PERSON

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No belts, no strings, no bother.
So snug and secure, you can do exactly as you please

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Available in packs of 10 and 20 napkins.

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Johnson & Johnson

Cover:
SANGEETA WAVEL of the Children's Orthopaedic Hospital, Bombay and SARITA CHAUHAN, a student of the Centre for Special Education, a school run by the Spastics Society of India.

Photographs : Taiyeb Badshah

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JAN 17 — 23, 1981

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YOUR MONEY, MY MONEY

1st PRIZE

Nothwithstanding all the hue and cry about the economic independence of women, many of us are still mentally backward about earning wives. My brother, for example, refuses to borrow a paisa from his wife even if he has to walk all the way from V.T. to Nariman Point. He is a free-lance artist struggling to find his bearings in a competitive world. However, he has no qualms about borrowing from the parents while his wife stands by, watching helplessly. Some of my own women colleagues actually gloat over the fact that their self-respecting husbands "refuse to touch" their money even in an emergency.

I earn, too, and our incomes are pooled together as one, to save and to spend as we will. In case one of us is temporarily unemployed, we have perfect understanding not to allow a fictitious ego to drive a wedge between us. My sister does not earn but is perfectly willing to start doing so in case her husband decides to throw up his job in favour of higher studies. Nor does he have any hang-ups about living off his wife's income to ensure a better future for both of them.

What price, then, a non-existent ego in front of a wife who is going to share your whole life with you till you die? Isn't the family a team? Aren't everyone's incomes supposed to be pooled together to reduce the burden borne by a single pair of shoulders? What use, then, an earning wife if her earning is solely for economic independence and not for supporting or complementing the income of her life-partner? Why give her money the "please-don't-touch" treatment?

SHOMA CHATTERJI, Bombay.

It's utterly ridiculous for a man to look upon his wife's income as 'untouchable' — and equally ridiculous for a wife who approves of such an attitude. Two incomes are a fact of life today, a necessity, and such idiotic pride only sours a good relationship. However, having said this we would exhort working women to build up some bank balance, or other assets, of their own. For, who knows...

COMING TO TERMS WITH WIDOWHOOD

2nd PRIZE

One of the saddest problems faced by a woman is widowhood. Most women rely on their husbands so much that they believe life would come to a stop for them if they were left to go on alone without their husbands.

Widowhood not only means grief and heartbreak, there are also practical difficulties. Hard adjustments like decision-making and doing things which were once done by the husband or in consultation with him. Direction and purpose in things are lost, as all their future plans were dependent on their husbands. Held fast in grief they feel unable to move forward into the dark, empty years which lie ahead for them. Though the woman may never wholly get over this tragedy, and the longing for that lost presence may remain with her lifelong, she can come to terms with it.

Once the initial anguish has passed, she must come to grips with life and reshape it to the best of her ability. The very attempt will prove strengthening and help in the healing. Many women are surprised by their latent capabilities when forced to rely on themselves. Loneliness can be warded off by maximum involvement in the life around her. Career women are more fortunate as they are never at a loose end and have their earnings to fall back on. The untrained can train or brush up on old skills and put them to use — learning is a rewarding end in itself and not just a means to augment the income.

If she is determined enough, the widow can fill the void to a great extent and make life worth living again.

VATSALA MENON, S. Delhi.

We are sure she would like to make life worth living again, but there are people around who won't let her. The widow is still a 'despised' and dubious commodity in several societies. The first thing to do is revise our age-old traditionalist view of the widow — the rest will follow automatically.

WIDOWS : THE DOUBLE STANDARDS

3rd PRIZE

The widow is a lonely person, often unable to face life when her main support has slipped away from her. Under the changed circumstances who shares her feelings? Her relatives? Not on your life! So why does society not allow a widow to get married again? Why is it permitting and encouraging men to do so? People commiserate with men, saying remarriage is essential for them, as it fulfils their sexual needs. Fine, but this implies that women have no sexual needs. Then again, it is argued on behalf of the male that since he has to go out to work, he cannot look after his children without a 'mother' for them. Why can't he solve this problem with the help of servants and relatives as the woman is expected to do? In any case, there can be very few step-mothers who would treat the step-children well.

Society resents it when a man enters a widow's life. All double standards. There is no equality. If children need a mother, don't they also need a father. Is a widow to be castigated for wanting to provide a loving father to the children who have just lost their own?

K. SURESH RAO, Trivandrum

Ah, these double standards. The men get away with a lot, don't they? Except, maybe, among the higher levels of society, widows are considered "scum", not worth considering as human beings any longer. Perhaps our younger generations will change all this — widows need not necessarily get married; but it is their life, the choice must be theirs and no one should have any right to criticise them for exercising that choice.

IT'S IN THE BAG!

Of late, it has become fashionable for working women to carry with them to their places of work not only an oversized handbag but also another massive rexine or plastic bag. The handbag understandably accommodates cosmetics and other knick-knacks required by women to keep themselves fresh all day long until their return home. But one is curious to know about the need for the second bag. Is it being used for a spare set of clothes for the homeward journey or for evening dates with their mates? Or is it for carrying magazines/novels, knitting materials, handtowels or sanitary pads? Perhaps it just might be necessary to take care of their after-office shopping. One really doesn't know. I'm writing this not so much out of a sense of curiosity but out of pity for these women whom I keep seeing, hardly able to balance themselves in over-crowded buses or trains. Could you, or any of your readers, kindly enlighten me on the origin of this crazy practice which has come to stay?

L. SOCORRO, Bombay

It's not a crazy practice — it's a very sane practice. And don't feel sorry for them — they can manage very well without your pity. Of all your various conjectures, one is pretty much correct. Today's working woman who goes home from the office to cook the evening meal or to take the children's homework or to rustle up tea and a light snack while the lord and master hides behind the evening paper, often has to do her shopping along the way. It could be meat or vegetables, it could be a supplementary restaurant dish, it could even be text books, or a slate and pen... whatever it is, she needs that big bag. It is now her symbol, her trademark, and she carries it proudly regardless of sniggers from shallow people who are ready only to criticise...

Comfit sanitary napkins introduce Comfit Tampons

The makers of the largest selling sanitary napkins now give you a choice.

It's a tough choice.

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Modern girls all over India are switching over to tampons. Because they're completely invisible and don't show even in the tightest clothes. Now with reasonably priced Comfit Tampons there's no need to pay exorbitant rates for smuggled tampons.

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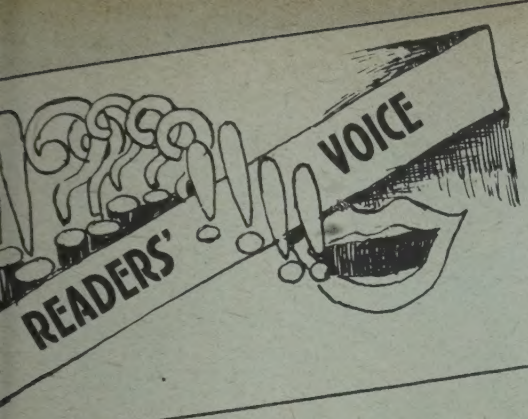

Most articles raise a question, a comment or at least a criticism. Write them down and mail them to us!

'E TEASED HIT BACK

The article "Delhi Women Hit Back" by Tripta Batra (November 9) describes in vivid terms the steps taken by courageous women in Delhi to fight eve teasing and other forms of molestation and attempts o infringe upon woman's dignity. Now that woman has abandoned her passive role for an active one, urban Romeos should beware. Women in other cities should also take steps to follow the measures taken by their pragmatic sisters in Delhi. Eve teasing results from frustration. If society could allow more healthy mixing of the sexes, it would result in diminishing this evil.

BEENA KRISHNAMOHAN RAO, Hyderabad

FILMS : A PERSUASIVE MEDIUM

It was quite interesting to read what Shoba Sadagopan wrote in your issue (November 29) under the caption, "The Right Plea For The Wrong Reasons". I however do not agree with Mr. B. R. Chopra that no film-maker can ever solve the social problem. I on the contrary feel our films can do wonders and achieve tremendous results if films are properly produced with a powerful story behind them to catch the public's heart. Many have alleged that it is the films of today that have morally degraded our young generation. If this is true then it is equally true that they can also educate and teach something of value to the audience.

PRABHAKAR S. HARSOLE, Indore

THE IMPORTANCE OF BLOOD

I have been going through with great interest your informative article on women and blood transfusion (Oct. 18) and also subsequently the Readers' Voice columns. True, blood is a very important and rare commodity. But there is need for a greater awareness both among the medical profession and the more enlightened public that in many cases, and particularly in post-partum haemorrhage, real blood transfusion is not only not needed but can be undesirable too. Transfusion of stored blood entails hazards like haematolytic anaemia, citric acid intoxication, allergic and pyrogenic reactions, potassium overloading, serum hepatitis, etc. Where blood loss is less then 30 per cent of the total volume and where the hematocrit value is more than 25 per cent, excellent volume substitutes like Haemaccel are freely available in the market. In fact, "blood for blood" is not always warranted and can be done away with in many cases and real blood can be saved for the more serious and demanding life saving situations.

V. G. PADMANABHAN, Lucknow

A BOLD PORTRAYAL

Hats off to Nadira Razak for her bold portrayal of Lakshmi's character in her story "A Woman's Decision" (Nov. 29). What is remarkable about Lakshmi is that she belongs to a rural set-up where it is more difficult for a woman to defy an age-old custom than it is for her urban counterpart. Readers' opinion about the appropriateness of Lakshmi's decision will naturally vary. While some readers will applaud her for her courage, others will denounce her for her hard heartedness towards her child. But what is praiseworthy about Lakshmi is that she has taken a decision and is fully prepared to bear the consequences.

AMINA AMIN, Ahmedabad.

ISSUE OF JAN. 24, 1981

REPUBLIC DAY BLUES

1980 was a year of turbulence and violence, of unprecedented price rise and man's inhumanity to man. Patriotism gave way to national disintegration, as seen in the north-eastern region, worship of woman as Shakti was replaced by rape and molestation, communal harmony was disturbed by the Moradabad riots, foreigners who took part in the prestigious Himalayan rally had their cars smashed by hooligans. If this is the legacy of the past year, what has 1981 in store for us? An incisive, if depressing analysis.

WHILE THE STARS PORTEND, HUMANS CONTEND

Is astrology a science or a sham? Are its practisers quacks or super scientists? Two conflicting viewpoints tellingly presented.

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A family's contentment is best seen at mealtimes as Marlex shows. For the housewife and her family, there's happiness in quick, piping hot meals.

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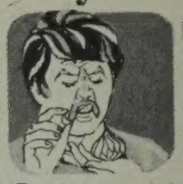
ART-2528

RANBAXY'S GARLIC PEARLS

A few facts you should know.

Garlic has been well-known from earliest times for its medicinal properties. Medical authorities have accepted the value of garlic in correcting various health problems. Garlic can be taken raw or cooked or in capsule form. But to derive the maximum medicinal benefits from garlic, it should be taken in the most effective way.

Why not raw Garlic?



Raw garlic cloves have to be chewed before the extract acts inside the body. But when chewed, they leave an unpleasant smell. When swallowed, they are difficult to digest. And the extraction is incomplete.

Why not cooked Garlic?

On cooking, the effective medicinal properties of garlic are lost.

Why RANBAXY'S GARLIC PEARLS?

Ranbaxy Laboratories, a trusted name with the medical profession, now gives you all the benefits of raw garlic—without the smell. Ranbaxy's Garlic Pearls contain the pure extract of raw garlic in easy-to-digest, soft gelatin capsules—the most effective way of deriving the medicinal properties of garlic.

RANBAXY'S GARLIC PEARLS

- **Help relieve gas and indigestion, ease heartburn.**
- **Reduce high cholesterol levels.**
- **Help ease disabling joint pains.**
- **Prevent and control recurring coughs and colds.**

Take Ranbaxy's Garlic Pearls – everyday. It's a healthy habit.

Take two pearls twice daily regularly.

The natural way to all-round health.

DESIGN'S THE THING

Rukmini Joshi's painstaking work and perseverance have paid her dividends — her one-time hobby has turned into full-fledged business. She designs printing blocks as well as mixes and matches patterns using traditional designs and creates lovely items. She also combines bandhni with prints. Her colour combinations are unique as she has "a fondness for playing around with designs and colours."

Rukmini's sarees, churidar-kurta sets, table linen and bed covers are much in demand. We have featured here some of her items. Delhi-based Rukmini has set up a block and screen printing unit at Faridabad where she keeps on experimenting. She has had several successful exhibitions in Delhi and in Bombay.

Mother of three children aged 15, 12 and eight, she divides her time between her family and her business. Talking about women who have put their talents to good use, Rukmini says, "It's so heartening to see women involved in so many different kinds of activities these days."

Your baking could win you a crown!

Prizes worth Rs 12,500/- just waiting to be won!

Enter the BOROSIL QUEEN 1981

BAKING CONTEST.

You like to bake? Then here's an opportunity you should take! **BOROSIL** is holding an exciting contest for creative baking. All you have to do to win any one of our many prizes, is to send us an original recipe—vegetarian or non-vegetarian, sweet or savoury—in English and post it to us along with the entry form, so as to reach us by 30th January, 1981. Nothing to buy, no entry fee. But make sure that the recipe involves baking, grilling or roasting. In short, the imaginative use of an oven and baking dishes.

After the initial screening, the 100 best recipes will be chosen. If yours is among them, you will be asked to come for the finals to be held on Friday, 6th March, 1981 at the Crystal Room (Central), The Taj Mahal Inter•Continental, Bombay. You should bring your prepared recipe in a glass baking dish for the finals—ready for our judges to sample. The panel of judges includes:

1. Ms. Premila Lal, cookery expert.
2. Ms. Tarla Dalal, cookery expert.
3. Ms. Sucy Eapen (head of the Nutrition and Food Technology Department, Institute of Catering Technology and Applied Nutrition).
4. Mr. Satish Arora (Executive Chef, The Taj Mahal Inter•Continental).

The **BOROSIL** Queen 1981 will win the grand prize, both categories taken together.

In addition, two first, second and third prizes will be awarded —one each for the vegetarian and non-vegetarian categories. 94 consolation prizes, common for both categories, will also be given.

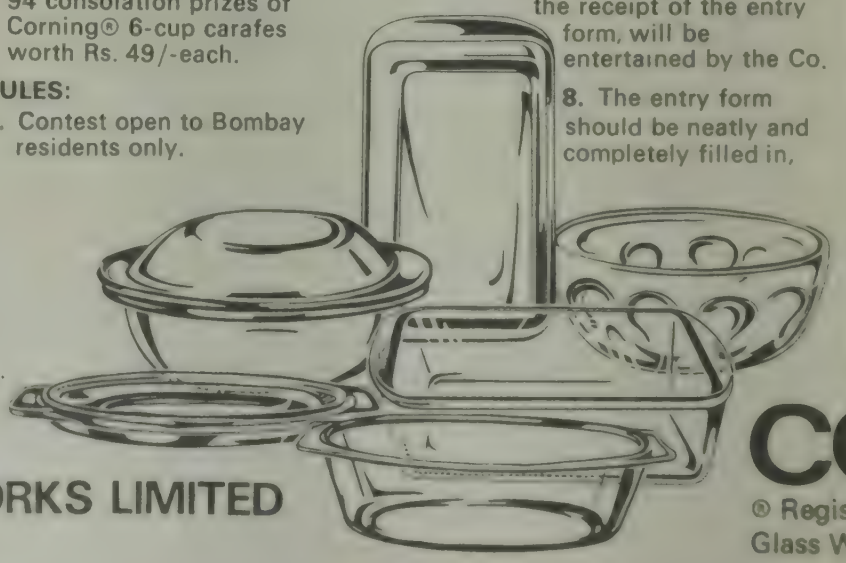
- Electric Toaster/Griller/ Oven (table model) worth Rs. 2000/- to the **BOROSIL** Baking Queen.
- 1st Prize: Rs. 1,250/- in cash, plus Rs. 275/- worth of Corning® Ovenware dishes.
- 2nd Prize: Rs. 750/- in cash, plus Rs. 150/- worth of Corning® Ovenware dishes.
- 3rd Prize: Rs. 400/- in cash, plus Rs. 100/- worth of Corning® Ovenware dishes.
- 94 consolation prizes of Corning® 6-cup carafes worth Rs. 49/-each.

RULES:

1. Contest open to Bombay residents only.
2. The company's employees, dealers, advertising agency and their families, cannot participate in the contest.
3. Recipes will not be returned and may be used for commercial purposes without obligation.
4. Finalists are requested to come at 1 p.m. on 6.3.81 to make the proper display arrangements.
5. Any number of recipes may be sent but each one must be accompanied by the entry form. Only 1 prize per participant will be awarded.
6. The decision of the judges will be final and binding.
7. No correspondence apart from the receipt of the entry form, will be entertained by the Co.
8. The entry form should be neatly and completely filled in, in English. Please send it by ordinary post only along with your recipe to:

   Borosil Glass Works Limited,
   44, Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan Road, Worli,
   Bombay 400 018.

   Mark on the envelope:
   RECIPE FOR 1981 BAKING CONTEST.
9. The last date for the receipt of the entry form is 30th January, 1981.



HURRY!

Send your recipes by 30.1.1981.

ENTRY FORM

PLEASE WRITE IN CAPITAL LETTERS

FULL NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

_____

OCCUPATION _____

EDUCATION _____

AGE _____

I promise to abide by all the contest rules. Borosil may use my recipe, if selected, for any commercial purpose without any financial or other obligations to me.

Signature of Contestant

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GIVE THEM A CHANCE

"Blessed are you who never snatch over tasks from our hands, to do them for us, for often we need time rather than help."

This beautiful thought provoking poster strikes the eyes as one enters the Sadhana School for the Retarded at Sophia College.

More often than not, the general reaction evoked at the sight of a mentally retarded child is one of pity and compassion. What we fail to realise is that these children do not want pity but acceptance and love.

According to Mrs. Krishnaswamy, Principal, Sadhana School. early detection is of prime importance in helping the mentally handicapped to adjust effectively in society. In most cases when there are no physical manifestations such as mongolism, microcephaly, etc. it is rather difficult to detect whether a child is retarded. During early childhood individuals with only a mild degree of intellectual impairment are not obviously different from other children. They may be somewhat slow in learning to talk and in other aspects of development, but for the most part they appear to be relatively normal. Their sub-average intellectual functioning becomes apparent only when difficulties with school work lead to a diagnostic evaluation. Painful realisation dawns slowly when parents realise the inability of the child to master simple skills.

The Sadhana School has about 80 children on its rolls. The major areas of improvement here are personal grooming, social behaviour, basic academic skills and simple occupational skills. An exhibition-cum-sale of greeting cards, ceramics, screen printing and handicrafts made by the children is organised from time to time.

"People fail to notice the talent that these people have," says Shubda the young, vivacious Vice-Principal of the school. One of her students, Rashid, she claims, is an excellent dancer. "But who will give them a chance professionally?"

One of the innovative plans of this institution is to screen audio-visuals on the activities of the handicapped children at the regular schools. Very often the normal child tends to look down upon the clumsy deformed child and the latter's poor motor coordination becomes the subject of ridicule. Normal children can be made to become more tolerant towards their less gifted brethren with the aid of such audio-visuals.

THERE IS MUCH WE CAN DO TO HELP THE MENTALLY HANDICAPPED, AND WE CAN BEGIN BY TREATING THEM AS PEOPLE RATHER THAN AS "PROBLEMS"

Aruna Mallya

Mother Tressle of Canossa Convent feels that peer-group identification is an important factor in the adjustment of these individuals. Like normal children, they too need company. Retarded persons experience unusually difficult stresses — inability to understand the complexities of the world around them and failure to meet the educational and other demands on them. The emotional problems resulting from myriad adoptive failures are likely to be manifested during adolescence when the retardate develops the usual desires for peer group identification. At the same time he is faced with the realisation that he is "different." Emotional disturbance often seems to stem primarily from the stress of being treated more like a "problem" than a person.

More than anything else, the mental retardate needs to be brought up in a congenial atmosphere at home. The family plays a very important role in aiding the retardate to cope with the demands made by society.

Sister Maria Dolores of The Dilkush Special School lays utmost emphasis on this factor One of the important highlights of the curriculum of this school is the parent-child coordination programme. Parents are invited now and then for informal get-togethers and counselling sessions. Frequent visits are paid to the homes of these children to guide the family on how to deal with the less fortunate member of the household.

Built in a beautiful setting, Dilkush is among the well-equipped special institutions in the city. Here the children are grouped according to their IQ from the kindergarten level up to the maximum level of academic skills that they can achieve (up to IV standard). Those who complete their academics are transferred to the vocational centre adjoining the main school building. There they are taught carpentry, handicrafts, toy-making and other job oriented skills. The young boys and girls earn a monthly salary ranging from Rs. 50 to Rs. 175. This self-sufficiency aids them to gain self-confidence and a sense of being "somebody". Children who are beyond the scope of improvement are trained to develop limited levels of self-help skills, personal grooming and hygiene which to a certain degree lessen their dependence on others.

It has been roughly estimated that about three per cent of our population is mentally retarded. Inadequacy characterises the educational and training facilities needed by the majority of the retardates in our country. Today we have just about 70 special schools located mainly in urban areas. How can we hope to train all the retarded to lead useful lives? How can we help them to become self-supporting?

As we usher in the Year of Disabled Persons, it is hoped that more and more community programmes will be organised for their rehabilitation. The need of the hour is for sheltered workshops where individuals who cannot compete successfully in modern industry can learn and perform simple occupational tasks under supervision.

Big industrial houses as well as small-scale enterprises and cottage industries can help by employing them in jobs like packaging, assembling, etc. In Bombay, Voltas has been generous enough to donate an occupational therapy classroom to the Sadhana School. It has also offered a contract to Dilkush for the labelling and packing of some of its products. While high priority is being given to prevention of mental retardation through adequate medical care, improved nutrition and the use of various diagnostic measures to ensure early detection and correction of abnormalities, very little emphasis is being laid on rehabilitation and welfare programmes. Most of these individuals rot in remote areas without any training whatsoever, while others are confined to the four walls of their homes ostracised by society in general, while still others become victims of exploitation.

This indifference is unpardonable. To quote a well-worded axiom, "Let us ensure that whilst our handicapped children may be the victims of fate, they shall not be the victims of neglect."

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INCAPACITATED AT AN EARLY AGE, THREE BRAVE YOUNGSTERS CHEERFULLY SHARE WITH THE READERS THEIR EXPERIENCES, HOPES AND AMBITIONS

THE "NAWAB" OF SHAHDARA

My name is Rajinder Singh. I am nine years old. I have to walk with two crutches because there is something wrong with my left leg. My other brothers and sisters are all right. They can walk and run properly. But my mother says that when I was very small I became ill with something called polio. After that my leg became like this.

But all the same I can play cricket! And I love cricket! You know Sunil Gavaskar, the captain of the Indian team? He is my great hero, and I can hit the ball as hard as he does! I can hit it so hard that my friends can't catch it, so I can make runs! Some of the other boys call me "langra", lame, but I can still play! I live in Shahdara, about 25 kilometres from Delhi. It is a very crowded place. Our home is very crowded too. Because my mother and father and the six of us brothers and sisters all live in two rooms, with a very small courtyard. My father works as a labourer. He makes 200 rupees a month.

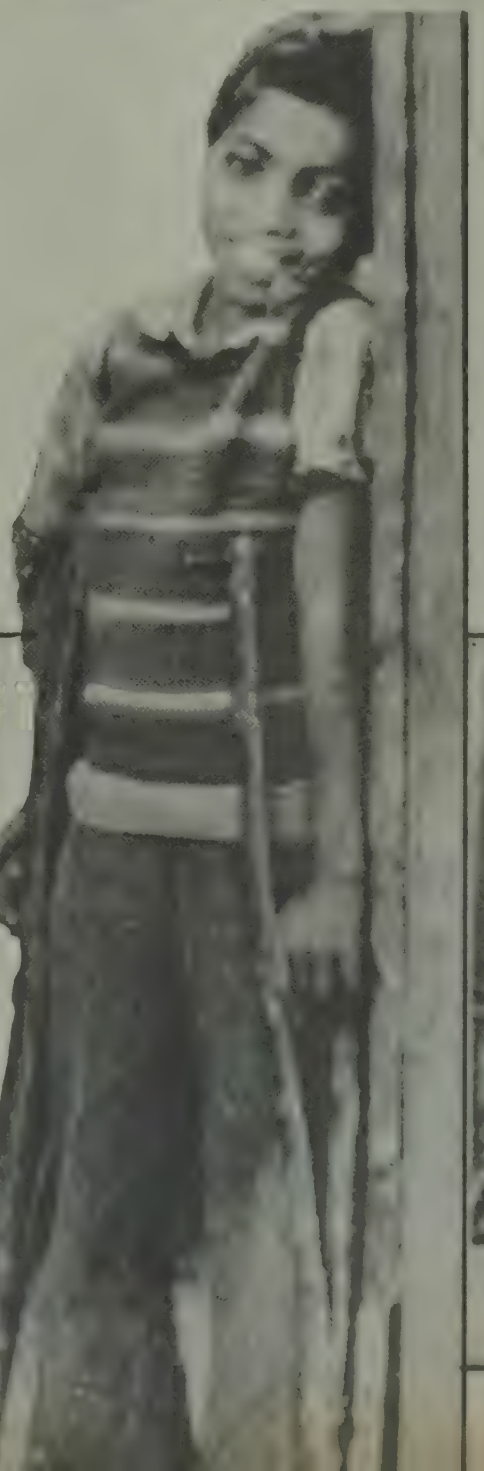
I used to go to school in Shahdara. All my friends are still there. But one day they said I should go to another school in Delhi. Some other children from Shahdara also go there. In the school I learn to read and write and do arithmetic. I have just been promoted to the second class. The teachers also teach me exercises to make my leg better. The other children and I used to go to the school in a school bus.

But the bus has been out of order for the last three months. No one knows when it will work again. So now the other children have stopped going. But very often my brother takes me on his cycle, because my parents feel the school is good for me. But he can only take me when his duty time is the same as my school time. He works, you see. It is a long ride on the cycle though. And a very bumpy one. I have to hold on to the handlebars very hard with both hands.

I get up very early, at six o'clock. I have breakfast very quickly because my brother can't be late for work. He lifts me up and puts me on a special seat made from a rolled-up sheet and we start the long ride to school. At two in the afternoon it is time to go home again.

After lunch I can go and play with my friends. We play "gulli danda" or "ball" or cricket. When it gets dark I go home and have to do some work for school. My sister Mamta, who is a little older than I am, is my teacher. My mother says that I won't be able to work like my father. So she tells me that I must study to become a teacher. Then I will be able to take care of myself. But you know what I want to be when I grow up? I will be the "Nawab of Shahdara"! Because then I will be able to wear clean clothes like the people in those big cars. Now I have only two pairs of trousers and a pajama. I have to wear them again and again. They are all in a dark colour so they won't look dirty and have to be washed all the time.

(From "A Small Voice", UNICEF South Central Asia Region)



Rajinder and his sisters.

Rajinder sets out for school on his elder brother's bike.

Yours...

"They ask me you know, these classmates of mine, what is it like to see and I tell them, yes, I have to tell them about the blue sky, the red rose, the green leaf .... and so much more .... For I have known what they look like. I have seen aayee's loving gaze and baba's wrinkled face and I have sat

"SUDDENLY ALL WAS DARK"

around the lantern worrying my brain over a sum in arithmetic. If only I had known that destiny would snatch away forever the light from my life! Perhaps. . . perhaps I would have stayed awake at night seeing forms even in the darkness, for now all is dark, abysmal darkness it is — no form no shape, no nothing.

"I was four when typhoid struck and blinded one of my eyes. It was as if half of me just died away, but there was the other eye to see with, and so I continued to derive all the simple childhood pleasures of rural life — going to the village school, romping about in lush green meadows, chasing the chickens, preparing dung cakes and all the hundred other things that children do in villages.

"Then it struck again as though with vengeance — this typhoid — and this time it robbed me of my other eye too. Suddenly all was dark, frightfully dark, and I cried out in fear.

"Then followed the journey from my village in Jalgaon to the big school for the Blind in Bombay. Many times had I longed to travel to Bombay ... to see Rambagh and Chowpatty. . . and here I was, travelling to the city of my dreams, not alas in an adventurous spirit, but with a heavy heart, a bundle of shattered hopes and a terrible sense of loneliness.

"Loneliness did not take leave of me for many days thereafter. Then there were adjustment problems at the new residential school. As news got around that a "newly blind" had joined the institution, they flocked around me. Suddenly I was the centre of attention. I must say this did a lot to pull me out of my depression. Wasn't I lucky to have seen God's creation at least for a short while? Here I met these unfortunate ones who had never even known what it is to be able to see.

"Riding high on this superior feeling, very soon I adjusted to my new environment. Now it's more than two years since I came to this place. Aayee and Baba come to fetch me for the vacations twice a year and so do my elder sisters and dada. And when I land home it is like regaining my eyesight. Everything seems familiar. I "see" the fields, I see the courtyard and ... yes, the blue sky and the green leaves ....

Sharadha Mahajan

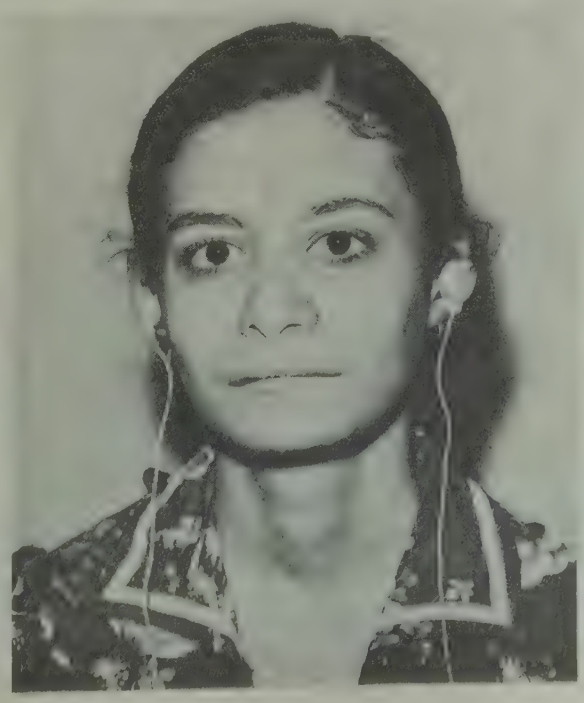
(Sharadha Mahajan is a 15-year-old student of the Dadar School for the Blind.)

"I WAS BORN AGAIN"

"You have not read my stories, have you? There is 'Jadichi Meral" and 'Chorichi Ghosta' and 'Vijaychi Ghosta' and .... well, Mrs. Deshpande, my teacher, says they are pretty good. Then there was this lady I met the other day who was enquiring if I was interested in becoming a writer. Not a bad idea really, perhaps I shall think about it sometime. But for now it's only studies. I have to pass my Matric, you see. And what a tough job it is to sit through all these lectures ... requires all the effort I can make, and I have to strain my ears to catch every word of what the teacher says. And it is not so easy, mind you, to keep up with all the normal children.

"Many a time have I longed to discard this darn hearing aid and to pretend to be normal, but the fact remains that I am deaf. Have been so, since birth.

"The big school is fun no doubt, but my little special school was much more fun, for over there everyone was like me. The atmosphere was homely. It was there that I was introduced to my life partner, my hearing aid, and it was there



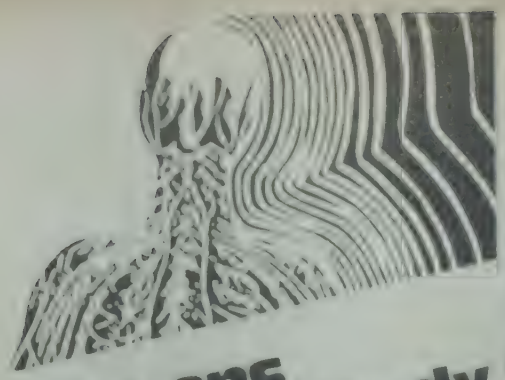
that I began to hear faint sounds growing louder and louder till they were audible enough. And then came the discovery of hearing my own voice ... Oh! so exciting and sonorous — like being born all over again.

"How can I forget those important milestones in my life? So I keep going back to the little school. Just being there gives me an immense pleasure which I just cannot explain in words. Not that I can explain anything verbally . . . the broken sounds that I utter are rarely understood by anyone except by those who are close to me.

"Friends. Oh yes. I have friends — my paint brush and my fantastic thoughts, and as I was saying, my stories ..."

Sarojini Savarkar

(Fourteen-year-old Sarojini is a VI standard student of St. Columba's School. She had her early training at the Education Audiology and Research Centre where she was an outstanding student. She has written several short stories which she hopes to publish shortly.)



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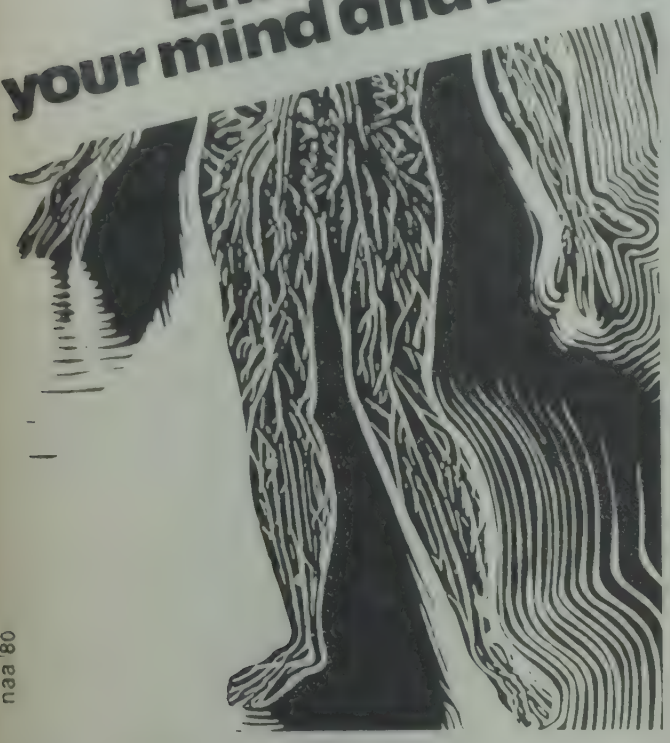

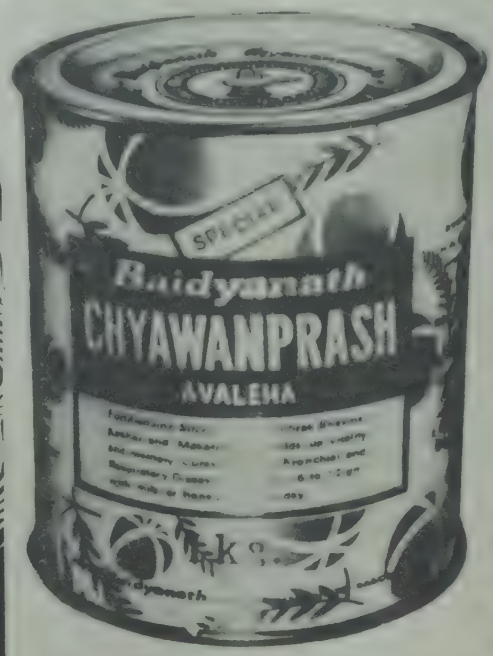

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REACHING OUT TO THE DISABLED

"The government must take up the task of a census for disabled persons" — Nama Bhat.

LEFT : "If one is willing to think resourcefully there are so many ways to help the handicapped to help themselves" — Vijay Merchant.

Meher Pestonji

As the International Year for Disabled Persons rings in, it is ironical that the majority of the millions disabled in the world have neither heard of the United Nations that has declared it their year nor are they expecting significant changes in their lives because of it. To Indira, a blind college student, it is simply a year when "I hope I pass my exams and land a decent job." To Vijay, a textile worker who lost the use of one arm and one leg after polio, it is a year of hope but no expectation. "I would be happy if someone could provide some way for us to avoid the rush on buses and trains, especially at peak hours. But I really can't see that happening." And to Dhondi, a one-legged beggar on a Bombay street, it is a year like any other "Iska matlab sub log paise denge kya?"

But the welfare workers are busy chalking out projects with the aim of enriching the lives of those left impoverished through no fault of their own. Plans are afoot not only for their physical and vocational rehabilitation but also to grant them legal rights, employment guarantees, and to educate society about them so that the foundation is laid for radical changes if not in the immediate, at least in the foreseeable future. To those involved in working with the handicapped, the IYDP presents an opportunity to highlight needs, raise funds for projects, and focus public attention on people who have too long been brushed aside because they are an eyesore.

Traditionally, Indian society has taken care of its weaker sections — the aged, sick and handicapped — within the folds of the joint family. In urban areas the break up of the family into nuclear units has created additional burdens on a few individuals. No longer are workloads and responsibilities shared between a group but fall onto the shoulders of one or two adults. Special training programmes for the handicapped have become essential in order that they themselves develop skills for maximum self-reliance.

Institutionalized care for disabled persons was introduced about a hundred years ago but it was not till after Independence that welfare schemes really took off ground. Even today only a small fraction of the handicapped population receive special training since the majority of the people are in rural areas while the majority of the services are available in urban areas.

"One major block in the road to progress is the fact that there is no systematic enumeration of the handicapped in different areas so that it is extremely difficulty to gear services to their needs," says Nama Bhat, Secretary of the National Society for Equal Opportunities for the Handicapped. "The general census records do list a person as disabled, but they do not describe the nature of the disability. If we knew there was a large number of persons with a particular handicap — say mental retardation — in a particular district we might be able to pressurize the government to open a special school there. As a part of the IYDP it is necessary that the government take up the task of a census for disabled persons."

THE IYDP PRESENTS AN OPPORTUNITY TO HIGHLIGHT NEEDS, RAISE FUNDS FOR PROJECTS, AND FOCUS PUBLIC ATTENTION ON PEOPLE WHO HAVE FOR TOO LONG BEEN BRUSHED ASIDE

Though the number of institutions has multiplied since Independence their impact remains limited as the number of handicapped have also multiplied correspondingly. It is estimated that there are 50 million handicapped persons of all categories — blind, deaf, orthopaedic, paraplegic, polio victims, mentally subnormal, leprosy patients — in the country, but despite 900 there were 32 institutes for the blind in 1944. Today their number has risen to 255, but the blind population which was then 2 million has also gone up to 5 million, of which only 30,000 are covered by educational and vocational rehabilitation schemes.

The United Nations has formulated a Declaration of Rights for Physically Handicapped Persons and another for the Rights of the Mentally Retarded. In the words of Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim, "Disabled persons have the right of full participation in the life and development of their societies. It is our obligation to enable them to enjoy these rights." Till today few developing countries have laws protecting the civil rights of disabled persons. The Government of India has only recently appointed a working group of four to prepare a draft of the Disabled Persons Act of 1981.

Ms. Bhat and Capt. H.J.M. Desai are two members of the working group. They point out that it is necessary to chalk out a national policy that includes prevention of disabilities as well as for the rehabilitation of the disabled. "The economics of preventing a handicap are miniscule as compared to the cost of rehab. work," says Capt. Desai, who is the General Secretary of the National Association for the Blind. "So many children go blind every year because of vitamin A deficiency. It would cost much less to administer regular doses of the vitamin at underprivileged schools than to see them through several years of blind schooling." The group has proposed to set up a Directorate for Disabled Welfare with specialized cells for each of the major disabilities and to appoint a Commissioner for Rehabilitation for the Disabled who will be responsible for policy formulation planning, budgeting, funding and evolving a comprehensive plan of action on an all-India basis

One of the major areas that need to be tackled is the family's

REACHING OUT TO THE DISABLED

and society's attitudes towards the handicapped. "It is part of Indian tradition to be compassionate," says Ms. Bhat, "but people have forgotten what compassion really means. It either begins or ends with an attitude of 'poor fellow, let's give him some money'. But that is the maximum most people do nowadays. It is important to treat a disabled person with dignity and courtesy, to neither be embarrassed by his handicap nor make him embarrassed by it."

Ms. Bhat's daughter, Parie, is blind. She was adopted as a blind child at the age of five. "Perhaps the most difficult thing for the parent of a handicapped child is not to become overprotective. You realize your child is more vulnerable than others, but you have to teach yourself to give her the space to grow so that she learns to fend for herself. As a child, Parie would stumble over things and fall often. Once she cut her knee so badly that she needed stitches. My instinct was to run to her, but I literally forced myself to remain sitting and say 'Come on, Parie, you can get up by yourself. . .' At the same time, I would take all the precautions to see that things weren't left lying around for her to trip over, that her books were always in place so she didn't waste time searching for them, that her matching clothes were kept together. Parie came to us as a child of five, today she is doing her post-graduation."

In the last decade many women's universities have introduced post-graduate courses in social work. While this has changed the complexion of welfare, especially in industrial relations, it has had little impact in the field of handicapped welfare. "People who have gone through years of professional training naturally want to make a career of it," says Ms. Bhat. "Working with the handicapped is not a career. It is a commitment. The work is demanding, the working conditions, tough. Not everyone is emotionally equipped to do it."

"When a normal person becomes handicapped either due to disease or an accident, after the physical symptoms have been treated, the first priority is to restore his self-confidence," says Capt. Desai. "We have to teach him compensatory skills and to restore as much self-reliance as the disability allows. Self-confidence only grows out of economic security, and we have to assure him of a job. You cannot imagine how frustrating it is for a blind man to educate himself and then find he can't get a job. Many advanced countries have made provision for this. It has been found that even mental retardates can perform efficiently in repetitive assembly type jobs. In Russia 252 enterprises are completely staffed by various categories of the handicapped. In Japan the profession of physiotherapy is reserved for the blind since their highly developed tactile sense makes them more effective as masseurs. U.K. has a law reserving a percentage of industrial and clerical employment for the handicapped. Some government departments in India have initiated a policy of reserving 3 per cent of vacancies for the handicapped (1 per cent for the blind, 1 per cent for the deaf, and 1 per cent for the orthopaedically handicapped) but further legislation is required to extend the policy to public and private sector as well."

The International Labour Organization has in a report stated that "certain types of work are done much more efficiently by the disabled than by able bodied persons. There are occupational progress reports on disabled workers which give evidence of a productivity level above average owing to greater diligence, a high ability to concentrate, profound loyalty and great pride in doing well at their work. All that is needed is well-designed vocational training programmes to enable them to compete with the able bodied in open employment." It is also necessary to teach employers to develop confidence in the abilities of the disabled so that they drop their reluctance to employ them. If persuasion fails, legal measures must be applied.

Equal opportunities for training, employment and social development is the theme propounded by Vijay Merchant, cricketer, industrialist and dedicated worker in the field. Currently involved in a scheme for establishing a national centre for the handicapped at a cost of Rs. 1 crore 25 lakhs, he has, in his personal capacity, employed 119 handicapped persons in his mills and has also initiated self-employment schemes for others. "Sometimes we give them cloth from our mills at wholesale rates and allow them to sell it from their homes. Some of them earn over Rs. 400. Or we give them sewing machines on which they can stitch and sell garments. If one is willing to think resourcefully there are so many ways to help them to help themselves. But when we start out in social work we often make the mistake of glamorizing them simply because they are handicapped. But they are human, like everyone else, and also get tempted by human frailties. As a group they have their share of bad eggs, who exploit their handicap. Last year the Bombay Municipal Corporation allotted 47 stalls in different parts of the city to be run by the blind. They were to sell articles like cigarettes, soaps, combs, etc. But within six months the stalls had been leased to normal persons at a high rent whereas they were paying a subsidised rent for them. In about three out of ten cases we know we might get taken for a ride, but what can we do? You can't let the other seven suffer for the dishonesty of three.

"WORKING WITH THE HANDICAPPED IS NOT A CAREER. IT IS A COMMITMENT."

"I can't deal with committees because I don't believe in giving answers for all my actions. If I feel it is beneficial to bend or break rules I do it." He gives the example of a project he's started for fruit-sellers. Handicapped persons can be fruit-sellers, but in a public market they are often subjected to harassment and pilferage from which they have no way of defending themselves. They also have a problem getting Municipal licences. Though it goes against the Factories Act, Mr. Merchant has allowed them to sit within the compound of his textile mills where workers buy bananas, boras and tamarind at break times. A banana seller manages to earn Rs. 8-10 per day.

Deploring the apathy of the privileged classes, Mr. Merchant says, "I wrote personal letters to 60 industrialists in Bombay urging them to extend the scheme to their mills and factories, but only five responded favourably."

The IYDP focus is on the physically and mentally disabled. But there is another group of disabled persons who have been ignored and are likely to remain ignored by the welfare agencies. Hijras and trans-sexuals are also handicapped, but it is their sex organs that are affected, not their mobility or functioning faculties. Mr. Merchant agrees, "of course they are handicapped — physically, psychologically and socially in as real a sense as any other group. And they are abused as well. But where are you going to stop extending services? The next thing you know you'll have persons with a clubbed foot or a hare-lip claiming the privileges of the handicapped."

The psycho-sexual needs of the physically handicapped have started receiving attention in recent years. Mr. Merchant has arranged marriages for blind couples. He also encourages marriages among other handicapped persons who would be able to function as a couple. The All-India Institute for Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation runs a marriage bureau to help bring together people with complementary handicaps. "There is no reason why a person with a non-functioning hand could not be married to a person with a non-functioning leg and have a normal married life," says Shobha Karvinde, herself a polio victim who runs the bureau.

Most of the orthopaedically handicapped hope to find normal partners, but the blind and deaf prefer partners having a similar handicap since they feel a greater affinity with each other's world which is very different from the sighted or hearing person's world. The most intense problems are faced by spastics who experience the stirrings of sexual desire with the release of hormones in adolescence, yet their ungainly movements and grotesque physical form arouse revulsion rather than response in the people around them.

"The greater the handicap, the greater the need of the individual, and correspondingly the greater the responsibility of society." says Ms. Bhat. "The most unfortunate part of our welfare programmes is that disabled persons are expected to find their way to us whereas we should find our way to them. Programme planners must provide for mobile services to reach the disabled at their doorstep. Only then will the IYDC have touched the lives of the millions who are as yet unaware of the facilities that are available to them. As John Kennedy said, 'A journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step. . .'"

ROOPA:

Spells "Success" In Three Languages

Jyothi Venkatesh

Like Deepti Naval, who was instantly acclaimed a promising young star after the release of her maiden venture "Ek Baar Phir", South Indian actress Roopa has turned into a star overnight with her debut-making Tamil film "Oru Thalai Ragam" which is doing for her what "Ek Baar Phir" did for Deepti, although it was made with a small budget and a cast of newcomers.

Roopa was at Prakash Mudali Street when I met her for this interview. It was raining cats and dogs outside and during the course of the interview, the lights went off half a dozen times lending an uncanny touch to the atmosphere.

"Oru Thalai Ragam" isn't exactly her first film. Roopa has acted in two Kannada, two Malayalam and five Telugu films. "My first film was 'Marpu' in Telugu. Fortunately for me, I wasn't bound by any contract with any film-maker. My screen name, Roopa, was suggested to me by U. Vishweswar Rao who had made 'Marpu' My real name is Prema, but since there was already a cabaret dancer called Prema working in Telugu films when I made my debut, I changed my name."

Today, in spite of all her efforts to be 'original', Roopa finds, to her chagrin, that after her debut in Tamil films, there are two more Roopas on the scene — Roopa Chakravorty and Roopa Chawda. "In fact quite a few film-makers here in Madras suggested that I change my name once again to Roopasri or Jayaroopa but I put my foot down. I am here to act in films and not to experiment with names. Tell me how many times can one change one's name?"

Roopa is determined not to accept roles starring her as the eternal sister. "I have had one bitter experience and that's more than enough. Before my 'Oru Thalai Ragam' was released, I was offered a sister's role in a film called 'Kali Koil Kapali.' In that film a new girl called Anuradha was cast in the romantic lead opposite Sekhar while I played Jai Ganesh's sister. I admit it was a powerful role but after that I started getting offers as a sister when 'Kali Koil Kapali' was released before 'Oru Thalai Ragam.'

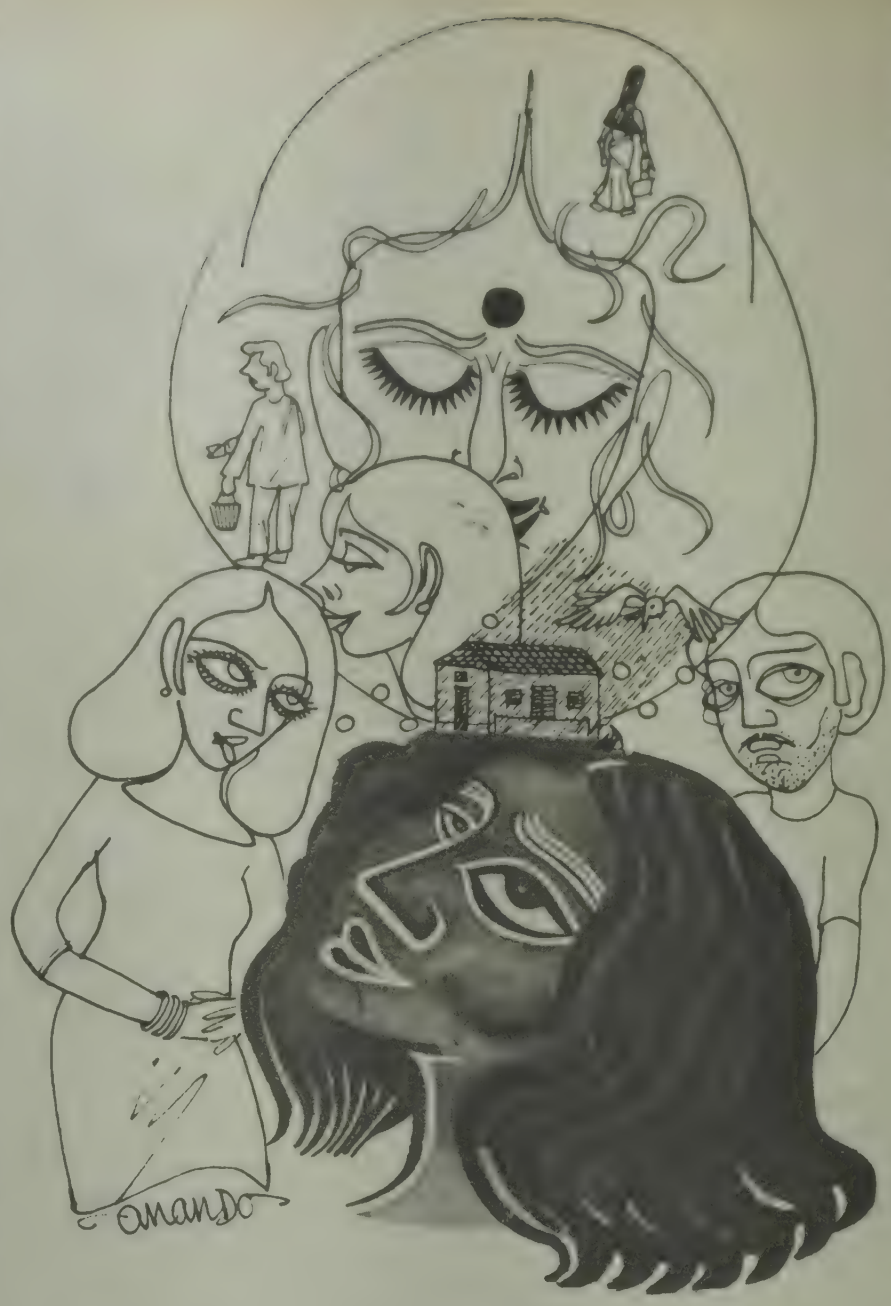
At present Roopa has nearly one dozen assignments on the floors — Tamil, Malayalam, Telugu and Kannada. Roopa is truly a multi-lingual star, although her mother tongue is Telugu. Some of her films are "Antharangam Oomaiyanathu" in Tamil with Jose, Rajni Sharma etc. "Mayil" in Tamil (being made by Dorai who made "Pasi"), opposite Rajes and Sattar, "Pulikku Piranthathu" opposite Vijayababu, Guganathan's "Moongil Katru" opposite Vijayani, "Padum Pachaikkili" opposite Hari Prasad, "Aadugal Ninai-

Continued on page 51

Photograph : Praveen Kumar

CAN YOU HEAR SILENCE?

Shashi Deshpande



WE'VE been sitting here and watching the road since the morning. When I woke up, I knew, even without opening my eyes, that it was not like every day. The noises were different. Splashing sounds on the road. A car starting, spluttering and dying away. A funny lap lap sound as if the sea had come close to us. And above all this, a loud drumming sound. I opened my eyes and it seemed dark. And there was Papa sitting and reading instead of rushing about getting ready. Then I knew what it was.

"Is it raining, Papa? Is the road flooded?"

"Go and have a look," he said, his eyes still on his page.

It was flooded. You coudn't even see the drums around the trees they plant hopefully every year. "Hey, Rashmi," I shook her. "It's flooded. No school for us."

"Good," she said and promptly went back to sleep.

Now it is still raining, but not as heavily as in the morning. The water on the road has gone down. At the edge of the pavement there is a crooked line of rubbish left by the water — single torn slippers, bits of paper, flowers, boxes, twigs and all kinds of trash. Even. . .ugh! . . .a dead rat! A crow is pecking at it, daintily, as if trying to choose the tastiest bits. Rashmi shudders when I say that and makes a vomiting face.

"Lunch," Mummy announces.

"Mummy, you're not going to work!" Chhaya says accusingly seeing that Mummy is dressed to go out.

"I have to. But after you've had lunch."

"You promised you wouldn't," Chhaya says.

"No, I didn't. I said if it kept on raining and if the roads were still flooded, I wouldn't go. I don't have any leave, Chhayu," Mummy says coaxingly. But Chhaya won't relent and picks angrily at her lunch. I can't eat much, either. I think of the crow and the rat.

As soon as we've had lunch we rush back to watch the road. The door bangs. Mummy has left. She waves to us from the pavement. She looks very small from up here. In a moment, she's lost among all the umbrellas.

With Mummy out of sight, I'm suddenly bored with looking at the road. "Come on, let's go out and play," I say to Rashmi.

"No, we can't. We have to wait until Tarabai finishes the clothes."

Tarabai came late today, and in a worse mood than usual. It was almost like an orchestra, the way she clanged the pots and pans. Mummy hates it, but she didn't say a word. She's a bit scared of Tarabai, we guess. Now Tarabai is banging away at the clothes. Thwack, thwack. . . the sounds come from the bathroom. In a while she comes out muttering angrily to herself and begins pulling yesterday's clothes off the line. She throws them at us. "Here, do something about them," she says. They're still damp. Rashmi and I look at them helplessly. Where do we put them? Tarabai is draping the clothes everywhere, wherever she gets some place, shoving us rudely out of her way as she walks about.

"Tarabai, what about these?" we ask.

"Put them round your necks," she says rudely.

I want to retort angrily, but Rashmi stops me. And I remember Mummy's, "Now, don't fight with her, girls. I need her."

"Tarabai, why are you so angry?" Chhaya asks.

"What do you want me to do? Sing and dance?" Tarabai says, though not so angrily. She's fond of Chhaya. They have long talks together and Chhaya knows all of Tarabai's problems — her drunken husband, her son who's in with the "daruwalas" as she says, her daughter who's sneaking out with boys.

"Can you really sing and dance?" Chhaya asks curiously, while Tarabai goes on mumbling, "No sleep the whole night, the rain kept pouring in, and I have to start making the chappaties at four. . ." She goes on and on while we chivvy her, asking her to hurry up for we want to go out and play.

When she has gone the room looks most peculiar. The curtain which divides the room into two has been pushed aside and instead there is a curtain made up of towels, petticoats and Papa's pyjamas. The fan flaps them into exciting, strange shapes. I would like to watch them, but Chhaya says, "Oooh, I'm feeling cold," and Rashmi hustles us out.

It's like a Sunday with the corridor full of playing children. Games are already in full swing. Once or twice the dustbin lids fall off with a loud clang as one of us runs round the corner at full speed and bangs into a dustbin. If you don't put the lid back, you get a terrible stink — a mixture of stinks, really — rotting vegetables, fish and all kinds of queer things. In a little while heads pop out of doors calling children home for tea. Sometimes Panna's mother calls us and asks us to have tea with Panna. We always refuse, but I feel left out when the others go in. Not for the food, really, though to be honest, sometimes it's also the food. Like the day they were frying onion bhajias in Vidya's house. I almost died. Now we rush in too and have our milk and biscuits. . . they're so soggy Chhaya refuses to eat them, the fusspot. . .and go back to play. We're playing hide and seek when Mummy comes home. I'm sitting on the floor, my eyes tightly closed, my back against the wall, counting in tens when I hear Chhaya scream, "Mummy. . ." I open my eyes. . .I'll have to start counting all over again now. . .and there she is, looking down at me with a funny look in her eyes. As if she is both angry and sad. But she only says, "Why are you sitting there in that filth, Megha? Come on, get up."

"Auntie, she's the den Megha, you're cheating. You opened your eyes. Count again."

"No, that's enough of playing. Come home now."

As soon as she opens the door, she sees the clothes flapp

ing all over. "Oh God!" Mummy says. And then, "Who put them up?"

"Tarabai. . ."

"Did she expect you to stay in this?"

"No, Mummy, we went out to play as soon as she left."

She tightens her lips, looks at her watch and says, "Five hours?"

In a rush she takes off her slippers, flings her bag away, washes her feet and begins rearranging the clothes. Chhaya gets excited and makes a game of it, hiding behind something and saying babyishly, "Where am I?" Her hands are grimy and she leaves a dirty mark on Papa's pyjamas. Mummy sees it and gives Chhaya a slap. A little one really. She can't slap like Papa does. But, of course, Papa is rarely home long enough to punish any of us. There are days when Chhaya doesn't even see him. He goes to work before she wakes up and she's asleep by the time he returns. There was a time when he used to come home much earlier. But then he had a job. "Now it's my own business," he told us once. "And I have to work very hard for a few years. Once I get going, I'll be able to spend more time with you girls."

"By which time," Mummy had said, with a smile that was not really a smile, "the girls will wonder who you are when they meet you."

Strangely, soon after this, we met Papa on the road and Chhaya didn't recognise him. "There's Papa," Rashmi had said. "Where?" Chhaya asked. And even when he came right up to us, she kept saying, "Where is he? I can't see him." We laughed at her and told Mummy, about it, but she didn't laugh. And that night I heard her speaking angrily to Papa and Papa saying, "But it's for them. We've got to struggle for some time." And I heard Mummy say, "How long? Oh God, how long?"

Now Chhaya cries until Mummy babies her and soothes her. Finally they both lie on Mummy's bed, Chhaya with her thumb in her mouth. Mummy pulls it out, but in it goes again. I look for Mummy's plastic netted bag that she carries to work. She always brings home something in it — vegetables, of course, and biscuits maybe, or samosas, or puffs or something. Today it is empty. "Mummy, I'm hungry," I say. It seems hours since we had our milk. "Didn't you get anything for us?" Rashmi asks accusingly. Mummy opens her eyes slowly as if she's too tired even for that. "I forgot," she says. We stare silently at her. "I was too tired," she adds. We stand glum. Now she smiles. . .and suddenly she looks like Chhaya when she knows she's done wrong. . .and says, "Why don't you go to the corner shop and get something for yourselves? Take some money from my purse."

As Rashmi points out some cakes to the boy. . . she's so bossy, she never gives me a chance to choose. . . a man waiting for his change smiles at me. The huge man behind the counter pushes some coins and notes across the glass top. The man pushes back a note and says, "One bar of chocolate." The boy brings our cakes and goes for the chocolate. I stand on tiptoe and watch the squiggly little figures as the man makes up our bill. The boy brings the chocolate and Rashmi carefully counts out the money. "Here, baby, for you," the man says to me. I'm too surprised to do anything but take the chocolate from him. But Rashmi, picking up the change, turns round instantly, snatches it from my hand, plonks it on the counter and drags me out of the shop. She walks fast without a word until we reach the crossing. As we wait to cross, I look back. The man is going in the other direction. "He's gone," I say. Rashmi relaxes her hold on me. The lights turn green. When we're across she says angrily, "Why did you take the chocolate from him? Don't you know better than that?"

I do. Mummy has told us long back. . . don't talk to strangers, don't take anything from them, don't go anywhere with them. "I didn't take it," I say defensively. "I was going to give it back."

"Taking things from a man!" Rashmi hisses at me. "Don't you know what men do to girls?"

"Of course I do," I say with dignity. "I know everything." I know the word, anyway. And I also know it's the most dreadful thing that can happen to a girl.

Rashmi speaks in a more friendly tone now. "Now, don't go and tell Mummy about it. You know how she fusses. She won't ever let us go anywhere alone."

I promise. But somehow I blurt it out after all. We've eaten our cakes and sorted our books for tomorrow. Mummy has put the cooker on for dinner and comes to us for our usual chat. And then I tell her about the man. She says nothing, she only pats Rashmi approvingly. But I know she's going to talk it over with Papa when he comes home. She's waiting for him now. We all are. It's time for him to be home.

But he doesn't come. He's very late today. It's funny how, when you're waiting for someone, the tick tock of the clock becomes louder than usual. That, and the sounds of other people's footsteps. Each time we hear footsteps, mummy sits up and listens intently. But the footsteps go on and she droops again. At last she says, 'Let's talk of something." "Mummy, tell us about when you were a girl," Rashmi and I say. We love to hear stories of her school, her friends and teachers. But today she talks of her home.

"I had a beautiful home," she says and looks at us with that "Oh, you poor children" expression on her face. "It had a tiled roof. Do you know how friendly the rain sounds when it falls on a tiled roof? And how gently it slides off from it on to the ground? It's a steady drip drip that can put you to sleep. Once, I remember, a bird came in sheltering from the rain. It sat in the rafters the whole night. Once or twice I heard it ruffling its feathers. Otherwise it was absolutely silent. And outside, when it rains, the waters run whoosh whoosh in the gutters. We used to wade in them. They were never dirty. . . just twigs, and leaves and mud in them. Sometimes in summer we slept in the courtyard. We could lie in the dark and watch the stars. And everything was so quiet that, when we spoke, the words came out soft, as if we were afraid of hurting the silence. The only sounds were those of birds going to bed, or those insects that go on 'tik tik'; rarely, a frog croaking. Otherwise . . ." She pauses as a bus screeches angrily to a stop. It starts with a roar and goes on again. ". . . there was just silence. I wonder if I'll ever hear silence again," she says sadly.

"Hear silence? How can you hear silence?" Rashmi asks challengingly.

"You'll know some day. . . if ever you get out of this place."

"Sounds silly to me, hearing silence," Rashmi says scornfully. Rashmi has to be rude to Mummy these days. And if Papa says, "Now, Rashmi, that's not the way to talk to your mother," she bursts out with, "You all hate me. You're all against me," and stamps out. And Papa says with a sigh, "Growing pains." And Mummy says, "It pains me too." And Papa laughs.

But it's true Rashmi is growing. She won't change her clothes when anyone is around, she won't let Mummy help her to wash her hair, she acts funny with Ravi next door. And she's either sulking or in a temper. Except with her friends, of course. With them she's. . . oh, so jolly!

"You don't even know what silence is, do you?" Mummy says pityingly to her. And I think of how our friends yell for us . . . RASHMI. . . MEGHA. . . and we yell back. . . COMING. . .

All this while we've been listening to the footsteps hoping to hear Papa's among them. There are fewer of them now. Chhaya is almost sleeping. Mummy suddenly rouses herself and says, " Have your dinner, girls. Chhayu, wake up."

We finish our dinner and still no Papa. Chhaya goes to bed. Rashmi and I argue about whose turn it is to sleep on the "camel." That's Papa's word for the hard, slippery sofa on which we sleep on alternate nights. It's my turn today. Rashmi goes to her place near Chhaya, grumbling about how much room she's taken up. I try to make myself comfortable on the "camel," but the pillow keeps slipping off. I can't sleep, anyway. Why is Papa so late? I can see Mummy is worried. She snaps at Rashmi who's still grumbling. Rashmi pulls her blanket over herself and turns her back to Mummy. Even her back looks angry. But Mummy doesn't notice.

Why is Papa so late? I'm sure now there's been an accident. Suppose he's dead? I imagine all of it and what we'll do and how sorry everyone will be for us. My tummy feels funny as if I have to

Continued on page 40

"I HAD A BEAUTIFUL HOME," SHE SAYS AND LOOKS AT US WITH THAT "OH, YOU POOR CHILDREN" EXPRESSION ON HER FACE. AND SHE SPEAKS SOFTLY OF FALLING RAIN AND BIRDS SHELTERING IN THE RAFTERS

Ask your Vimal Retailer for: Crystal Suede, Young Turk, Speedster, Hi-Sophy, Fairlady, Sweet Sofy

Queen, Real Girl, Beauty Spot, Everglad, Race Winner, Hi-taste, Texlone, Veepee, etc.

THE LAW:

The law affects our lives much more than we tend to think. It pays to be aware of our existing rights, as well as the rights we have to fight for

WHO IS WINNING THE CUSTODY BATTLE?

Rita Rahimtoola

Those who saw "Kramer vs Kramer", the tear-jerking movie, or read the book on which it is based, have probably got the idea that courts grant custody of children, particularly those of tender age, to the mother and not to the father. Indeed, in the U.S., until a few years ago, the rule was for the mother to be granted custody. As one lawyer remarked, "She would have to be a street-walker, a drug addict or both, before she could be proved to be an unfit mother."

Judges saw the father as the breadwinner and the mother as the home-maker who would have the time to look after the children.

With changing social circumstances, these sterotypes no longer hold. The roles of the two sexes are not as sharply defined as they used to be. More and more mothers are pursuing meaningful and lucrative careers and bringing home the bacon, while fathers are helping in taking care of the children. Magazine advertising and T.V. commercials promoting children's goods for example, are no longer slanted at the little woman, but show a happy father expertly diapering and feeding the baby.

The new social reality was first reflected in U.S. courts in 1972 when the Supreme Court struck the blow for fathers. In **Stanley v. Illinois** the court granted the father of an illegitimate child the right to seek custody.

Since then courts in the U.S. no longer assume that a father is incapable of looking after his child. It is left to the discretion of the individual judge to decide who should have custody. The determining factor is the "best interests of the child" and there is no sexist bias in favour of either parent.

In India too, the trend is for the judges to decide in accordance with the best interests of the child without a sexist bias. But here tradition favours the father. In India, paternity has been considered more important than maternity, except in some pockets where the matriachal system was followed. The child is part of the father's family in terms of inheritance, maintenance and status. It takes his name and follows his religion. An unscientific seed-receptacle theory is probably behind this thinking. The father's is the seed and the mother is the mere receptacle. After having discharged the "fruit," the mother is no longer important. In law, the father is the "natural" guardian of the child as is the mother, but the mother's right is subordinate to his. Only in the case of an illegitimate child is the mother's right prior. However, in more recent years, the judicial trend is to consider the interests of the child, paramount over the "right" of either parent.

In India the law on guardianship and custody has to be gathered from several sources. These sources are: a) the personal laws of the parties (that is, Hindu, Muslim, Christian and Parsi law); and b) the Guardians and Wards Act 1890.

HINDU LAW

Traditional Hindu law regarded the father as the natural guardian of the person and of the separate property of his minor children. Next to the father was the mother unless the father had appointed another person as the guardian by will.

If both father and mother were dead the court would appoint the nearest male paternal relative as the guardian. Failing a male paternal relative, the court would appoint a maternal relative or some other person.

The court had no power to appoint a guardian of the person of a minor, whose father was living and the father was not, in the opinion of the court, unfit to be the guardian of the minor. A father who changed his religion could continue as the guardian of his minor child.

The traditional Hindu law has now been codified. While the position of the father as the natural guardian has been maintained, there are a few significant changes made by the Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act 1955. Under this statute, no person can act as the natural guardian of a Hindu minor if he has ceased to be a Hindu or if he has renounced the world. A second change (section 13) is that in the appointment of any person as a guardian by the court, the welfare of the minor is the paramount consideration. A third change is that custody of an infant under five years is with the mother.

Traditional Hindu law did not envisage divorce and hence there were no provisions regarding the custody of children of divorced parents. Both guardianship and custody of the person of the minor were with the father. The difference between guardianship and custody is that guardianship is a more comprehensive and valuable right than custody. The guardian may give custody of a minor to another person without losing the right of guardianship and he may renew his custody of the minor at any time.

In a divorce case, the court might give guardianship of the child to the father and custody to the mother until the child reaches a certain age.

The modern Hindu law on custody of children of separated or divorced parents is given in section 26 of the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955. The court has to decide about the custody, maintenance and education of minor children consistently with their wishes, wherever possible, and in their best interest as directed by the Guardians and Wards Act and the Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act.

In **Mohini v. Virendra Kumar** (A.I.R. 1977 S.C. 1379), the divorced parents of 11-year old Raju quarrelled over his guardianship and custody all the way to the Supreme Court. Under section 6 of the Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act, the guardianship and custody should have been given to the father as the natural guardian because a) he had not changed his religion, b) had not renounced the world, and c) Raju was over five years old. But the Bench relied on section 13 of the Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act which makes the welfare of the child the paramount consideration, and awarded guardianship and custody to the mother. The father was given visiting rights and "periodic" custody during Raju's school holidays.

The mother was awarded custody of her daughter (age 12 years) and son (age 10 years) in **C.S. Reddy v. Yamuna** (A.I.R. 1975 Knt. 134) in preference to the father on the ground of "welfare of the children" which the mother was presumed to have more closely at heart and more capable of looking after than the father "who had to attend to his business the whole day."

Though the father is the natural guardian under Hindu law, it is quite clear that both guardianship and custody may be given to the mother by the court if the court considers this to be in the interests of the children.

Guardianship and custody may be given to the mother by the court also on the ground that the father is not a fit person to be the guardian. A father may be declared to be "unfit" if he is not of sound mind or is not interested in the children, or has married a second wife. If the children are old enough to express a preference and the court considers that this preference is formed intelligently and on relevant grounds, then the court will take their preference into account.

MUSLIM LAW

Under Muslim law also the father is the natural guardian of his legitimate minor children. A guardian means a person who lawfully has the custody and care of the person of a minor or of his property, or both his person and property. Guardianship of the person is referred to in Muslim texts as **hizanat** or custody. Muslim law grants custody to a mother of her young children. The mother retains custody of her sons up to the age of seven years and of her daughters up to the age of puberty under Hanafi law. Under Shafi and Maliki law, she retains custody of her daughters until their marriage. The mother is given a much shorter period of custody under Ithna Ashari Shiite law — until the age of two years in the case of sons and seven years in the case of daughters. Ismaili Shiite law gives custody to the mother of the child until it can eat and dress by itself without help, that is, about the age of seven years.

If the mother is dead or is disqualified (by her remarriage for instance), the custody of the children is given to her mother or to the nearest female relative in preference to the children's father under Hanafi law. Under Shiite law, in the absence of the mother, custody is given to the father. In the absence of both parents, it is given to the father's father.

Whereas earlier judgements placed much emphasis on the father's right to guardianship and even overlooked the maternal grandmother's preferential right to custody under Hanafi law in case the mother was absent, recent case law has rectified the position.

In **Ainunissa v. Mukhtar Ahmed** A.I.R. 1975 All 67, the court awarded the custody of a son to the mother. The judge said that in cases of custody, it is not so much the right of the guardian with which the court is concerned as the welfare of the child. This is in accordance with the provisions of the Guardians and Wards Act.

CHRISTIAN AND PARSI LAW

Both the Indian Divorce Act, 1869, which covers Christian marriages and the Parsi Marriage and Divorce Act, 1936, leave the question of the custody, education and maintenance of children to be decided by the court and the court can make such orders as it thinks fit in the interests of the children. It may revise these orders from time to time on an application of one of the parties.

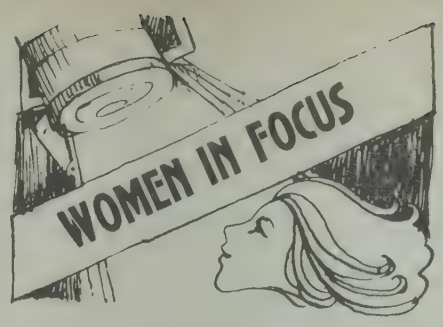
CIVIL LAW

In the case of a separation or divorce under the Special Marriage Act, the court has the discretion to make orders with respect to the custody, maintenance and education of minor children of the marriage, consistent with their best interests.

In matters of guardianship and custody of minor children of divorced or separated parents, the court will take into account the personal law of the parties as directed by the Guardians and Wards Act, but it will be guided primarily by the welfare of the children rather than by the "rights" of the parents.

The court may also take into account the wishes of the children, if they are capable of making an intelligent preference.

Absolute discretion is given to the court to determine what are the child's best interests. Questions of visiting rights and access to the child by the parent who does not have custody are also determined by the court at its discretion.



SUNITI PUNGLIYA

A SOCIAL REFORMER

"Don't mistake me for a social worker," she said, "I am a social reformer. There is a difference between social welfare work for women and the women's movement, and it is with the latter that I am involved." Mrs. Suniti Pungliya, practising lawyer and founder-member of the League for Social Justice, set up this organisation in Pune in 1976 with the intention of making women aware of their legal rights since the passing of the Hindu Marriage Act of 1955. Limited though these rights are, women remain naively unaware of what is legally allowed in case of divorce, separation, remarriage, adoption and inheritance.

In 1975 Mrs. Pungliya wrote a book in Marathi — **Stri Ani Kayada** — Women and law — which dealt with what rights the law accords women. In simple, layman's language, she explained the marriage, succession, maintenance and adoption acts and other Hindu laws that affect women. Contrary to her expectations the book sold well and she was beseiged by invitations from women's groups, clubs and welfare organisations to give talks on women's legal rights. She also began contributing articles to a Marathi magazine, **Stri,** on the same subject.

During the course of her tours and talks, she was amazed by the ignorance of women on the topic of law and decided to wean herself away from her legal practice in Bombay and set herself up as a legal adviser in Pune. Thus was formed the League for Social Justice and its subsidiary body, the Legal Aid Centre. Mrs. Pungliya's clients are predominantly from the middle and upper classes — literate women from all over Maharashtra who come for counselling and advice. The three most frequent woes of a woman are that her husband drinks, or is living with another woman or that he has stopped financial support after a legal separation. In cases where a woman is contemplating divorce, Mrs. Pungliya outlines what a divorce would involve, on what grounds a divorce will be granted, the problem of custody of children etc.

The organisation has also conducted five conferences on women's issues such as family law, planned parenthood, political representation of women in parliament, the image of women as depicted by the mass media, and rape in its social context, for which 30,000 pamphlets on "Myths and facts about rape" were printed and distributed. The conferences attempted to draw attention to specific women's problems, to women's status as second class citizens, and to the inequality between the sexes in a so called democratic country.

More recently, on December 15 Mrs. Pungliya presided over the meeting of the League for Social Justice which was held to discuss the disturbing revival of the sati cult in certain backward areas in the North. At the meeting, a resolution was passed condemning the revival of the practice of sati, and requesting the Central Government not to allow the construction of a temple in New Delhi in honour of Narayani Devi.

Mrs. Pungliya graduated from the University of Pune with a B.A. In Economics and Political Science. She completed her B.Sc. in Sociology in London and later in 1965, her B.L. at Gray's Inn, after which she returned to Bombay and set up her practice. Her interests are varied — drama, dogs, touring, and writing reviews on English plays in Marathi magazines. In a couple of years she proposes to wind up her Bombay practice and concentrate on educating women on the rights they know nothing about — women's rights.

Minu Cherian

Let's hit fashion's high spot this yea exquisite and striking printed handl sarees from the South. A galaxy designs — both contemporary as wel traditional — in inexpensive "Kotas" cottons and organzas — shimmer with gold borders and "butis" printe

LEFT: Perfectly suited to the happy mood — huge floral sprays emphasize the border and pallav in an unusual combination of green, blue and black,severed by a traditional print throughout the saree length.

RIGHT : Full blooming beauty in red and white — border and pallav strewn w butis, interspersed with woven zari borders to give the festive touch.

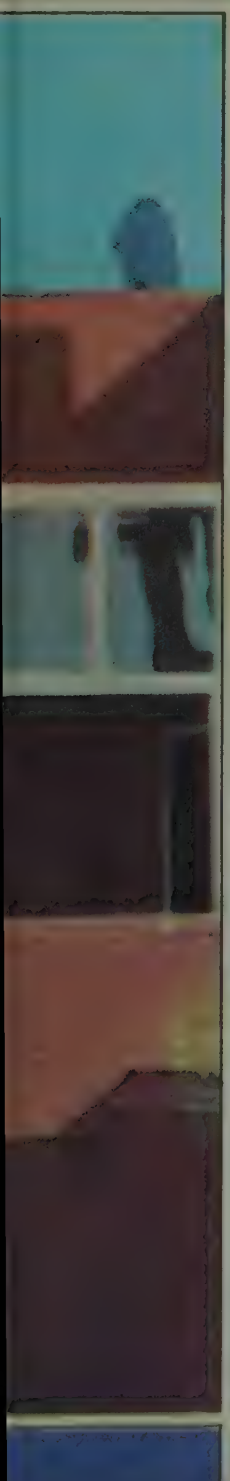
Kala Handloom Sarees,
Courtesy : Kala Fabrics, Coimbatore

drous hues. These symphonies in
gn and colour are also easy to wash
wear, and being so cloud-soft and
er-light, drape perfectly, clinging to
form. Their beauty and look of
eous luxury will captivate you and
admiring glances and compliments.

**W : Traditional paisleys adorn the
rs of this cotton Kota in a
combination of red and blue.**

**V RIGHT: Step out gracefully and
fully — once again floral butis bloom on
llav and borders in a striking shade of
e and green, the other,
nustard and brown print.
quare motifs all over the saree with an
ive pallav with a gold border.**

n Courtesy : Welcomgroup Searock, Bombay.
hs : Taiyeb Badshah



A TOUCH OF TRADITION

THE STORY SO FAR

Rita Roy, a 12-year-old orphan arrives at Kanchrapara, near Calcutta, to spend the last fortnight of her summer holidays with her Uncle Sunil and Aunt Sheela who live in a picturesque area of the Railway Colony in a red brick house called Gul Mohar. Aunt Sheela expresses surprise when she learns that her sons, Babloo (10), and Bapi (8) failed to meet Rita at the station. Rita finds the situation decidedly odd, especially since Bapi vehemently denies being told of her coming. Putting the matter out of her mind, she concentrates on the lovely house with its neat, pretty interior, savouring the luxury she was so unaccustomed to at the orphanage.

One day after much hesitation, Aunt Sheela decides to show Rita her grandmother Didima's room which is always kept locked. Glancing around with interest, Rita sees Blackie, Didima's stuffed tom-cat, and the collection of clay dolls from all over India. But an empty space in the second row indicated that one doll was missing.

NOW READ ON . . .

In the darkness Rita wiped her face again and again with her handkerchief, trying all the means she knew of to invite sleep. She stared hard at the ceiling. She counted sheep. She even concentrated on the even breathing of the boys as they slumbered. Nothing seemed to affect them.

But it was no use.

The sitting-room clock struck midnight!

And still she was wide awake.

Rita got up finally and went to the window. The night outside was still; even the crickets had forgotten to chirp. In the pale moonlight the trees looked like silent sentries.

After standing for a bit, Rita decided to try once more to sleep. She was about to turn away, when a faint sound caught her attention.

She listened.

Footsteps! Slow, shuffling footsteps on the other side of the hedge!

Her thoughts flew at once to thieves. Rita crouched low behind the window sill, as the steps drew closer. Whoever it was, seemed to be heading for the back of the house.

Should she raise an alarm? Rita thought.

Then, as the footsteps faded, she decided it was perhaps her imagination.

She listened again. But unmistakable sounds now came to her ears: the sound of a door opening; the sound of keys jingling.

It was not her imagination. It was real. And the sounds seemed to come from the direction of Didima's room. Someone was trying to get in!

The dolls! The dolls were in danger, Rita thought in alarm. She must do something.

Her heart thudding away, and feeling both afraid and excited at the same time, Rita climbed over the sill. She dropped down softly on the grass of her aunt's private garden. She slipped through the gate, and headed round the house.

As she turned the corner, she realised her guess had been correct. For the door to Didima's room stood slightly ajar. Shafts of light flowed through the shutters on to the grass. But, as she crept up to peep in, Rita discovered that the person inside was no stranger.

It was Aunt Sheela!

Aunt Sheela, with her hair hanging down her back in a loose plait! Aunt Sheela, with her saree looking as if it had been tied in a great hurry!

And Aunt Sheela appeared to be in a great hurry herself. She was searching for something — upsetting drawers, peering into the almirah, looking under the bed. And every now and then she threw a nervous glance at the front door, as if she did not want to be caught.

Rita turned back as silently as she had come. She wondered. What was Aunt Sheela searching for so late at night? If it was the doll, why did she have to move around like a thief in her own house? And why did she go round the hedge, when the shorter route would have been through her own garden?

It was all so puzzling. Rita wished she knew the answers.

The only outward sign of Aunt Sheela's secret mission was that she looked a bit sleepy at breakfast next morning. She was quite cheerful, otherwise.

"Have some more toast, dear," she offered Rita generously.

Rita said: "Yes, please," already enjoying her fifth slice. The country air certainly gave her an appetite.

In the light of day, however, the events of last night seemed like a dream. Chiefly, in view of her aunt's mood. But, perhaps, she had found the doll! Which was why she was pleased, Rita felt.

A short while later she discovered that was not so. It was when Aunt Sheela said, the moment they were on their own, "Dear, I need your help today. I'm a bit worried about that doll. We must search for it together."

She did not mention her search of the previous night. So Rita did not speak of it, either.

"Of course, Aunty!" she agreed quietly, though she was really quite excited.

"We'll start with the almirah first," Aunt Sheela said briskly,

PART THREE

the mystery at gul mohar

A Novel For Children

Vernon Thomas

once they were inside Didima's room. "Perhaps the doll broke and your Didima kept the pieces in there."

The state of disorder in which the contents of the almirah were, was proof enough that last night had not been a dream. Rita pretended not to notice, though. And as her aunt offered no comment, they worked in silence, passing from shelf to shelf, in a thorough search.

But there was no doll.

Aunt Sheela sat down on the bed finally, quite exhausted.

"Dear me!" she sighed. "I don't think that doll will ever be found. I wonder what your Didima did with it! I used to like it so much."

"Which one was it?' asked Rita.

"The Kathakali dancer."

"But the Kathakali dancer is still here," Rita pointed out, going to the showcase at once to check.

"Oh, then it must be the Garba dancer!"

"The Garba dancer is also here."

"Dear me! Wrong the second time!" Aunt Sheela passed a hand wearily over her forehead. "Now which one is it?"

"What does it matter?" she asked, after a moment's thought. "The fact is a doll is missing. That spoils the set. Your Dadu bought those dolls for your Didima as a birthday present some years before he died. Your Didima always treasured them for that reason."

"I know. Didima told me," Rita agreed.

"Your Didima told you quite a lot, didn't she? Maybe she did mention the missing doll?"

"No, Didima never told me a doll was missing."

"Then she must have spoken of other things. Like Blackie, for instance." Aunt Sheela pointed to the cat.

Rita stroked Blackie's head affectionately as she answered, "Oh, yes, Aunty, Didima spoke a lot about Blackie! She loved him very much."

"She did, though that cat was a nuisance at times. Lying on the cushions, stealing the milk, racing about the house. I found it very difficult to like him. But . . ." and Aunt Sheela's voice dropped to almost a whisper, "If you think hard, dear, you might be able to remember something! Can you?"

"About what?" Rita wanted to know. She realised this was the second occasion when she had been asked a similar question.

"Did she mention her other possessions, for example?" Aunt Sheela shrugged. "Like her clothes and things. Your Didima had a lot of lovely things."

But Rita shook her head firmly. "Didima only told me about Blackie and the dolls. I know nothing about her other things. Perhaps, it was because Didima did not think I would be interested."

Her aunt did not appear to be listening at first. Then she said quickly, "No, no, I guess not," and getting off the bed, she prepared to leave the room.

At bedtime that night Rita felt thirsty. After she had undressed, she went into the dining room for a glass of water. As she filled a glass, she could hear her uncle and aunt chatting in the adjoining sitting room. The curtains were drawn, so she could not see them, but in the stillness, she could hardly help overhearing their conversation.

"I told you not to bring that girl here," she heard Uncle Sunil say. "It is a waste of time. She knows nothing."

"She knows a great deal." That was Aunt Sheela. "She is just pretending. She is cleverer than I thought. But sooner or later I shall trick her into speaking the truth."

Rita wondered at first what it was about. Then, as her aunt continued, she knew.

"Why, didn't she make the trip here all on her own?" Aunt Sheela spoke. "If she was not smart, she would have remained at the station till someone went to fetch her."

"So, you did not send the boys to meet her after all."

"No, I did not. I wanted to test her common sense. And she proved she has plenty, by finding her own way here. She's as smart as that mother of yours."

"You never did like my mother, did you?" asked Uncle Sunil.

But Rita did not wait to listen further. With the shock she had just received, she barely managed to get back to bed without walking into the furniture. What was she expected to know that would be of interest to them, she thought in alarm.

Two things were certain though. She had been invited to Gul Mohar for a reason. And Aunt Sheela had been untruthful about sending the boys to the station to meet her that first morning when she had arrived

The big question was: Why?

The question was still bothering her as dawn broke and the birds started singing their morning song. Rita had been awake for most of the night, too troubled in mind and too puzzled to shut her eyes for long.

Her brain was like a timepiece—ticking away with unanswered questions. What was it all about? What did Aunt Sheela suspect she knew? Did Didima's room hold a secret?

The more she thought about it, the more puzzled she became, though knowing that she had been invited with a reason, was an important discovery.

Perhaps, if she could get into Didima's room on her own she would find the missing doll! Rita did suspect that the matter concerned more than the doll though the doll might help.

Yet, how was she to get in when her aunt had the key?

And then a thought struck her and Rita sat upright in bed. The entrance through the kitchen! Why hadn't she thought of it? If she guessed correctly, that door did not have a lock. And if she guessed correctly again, Didima's almirah was blocking it on the other side.

Still, with a bit of luck, she might be able to squeeze through the space between wall and almirah. The only real problem would seem to be the door itself. Did its panels open into the kitchen, or into Didima's room? If the latter, then it would not be possible to get in, because the almirah would be blocking the way.

SHE DIRECTED THE BEAM OF LIGHT ON TO THE ROWS OF DRESSED DOLLS, EXAMINING EACH ONE CLOSELY. AND THEN THE DOOR SUDDENLY OPENED

Rita decided. She glanced at the time-piece on the dressing table. It was just after four. Aunt Sheela got up at five. That gave her almost an hour.

Taking her small torch from under her pillow, Rita got off the bed. She listened for a moment to make sure that the boys were still asleep, then stole out of the room. Barefoot, she made good progress — through the dining room and into the kitchen. There was no need to use the torch as there was a little daylight coming through the skylight in the dining room.

In the kitchen, a minute later, she undid the bolt of the connecting door. She sighed in relief as its panels swung towards her. The darkness beyond and the back of Didima's almirah now faced her. Rita ran her hands along its dusty surface, found that there was some space, and managed to squeeze through into the room.

Once inside, she turned on the torch and began to search.

First, the showcase!

She directed the beam of light on to the rows of dressed dolls, examining each one closely. Yet, save for the vacant space, there was nothing — no trace of the missing doll or of anything else.

What else? She really did not know. She kept on looking, hoping to find something that would help, but, no luck.

The dressing table came next. First the top, then the drawers. But again, she found nothing. So she turned to the almirah next. It was open. Aunt Sheela

Continued on page 40

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BETTER WITH BATTER

Premila Lal

Curious though this may sound, batter cooked foods make a delicate and a subtle dish. It has to be served sizzling and bubbling hot. A batter is a mixture of flour, milk and water, and generally egg. This mixture is beaten well, to incorporate air, which expands during cooking, giving a light puffed-up mixture. Batters consist of two types. One is the coating or the thick batter used for fritters, vadas or boondis. A very good way of using up leftover fruits and vegetables is to enclose them in coating batter and deep fry. The other is the thin batter generally made use of in puddings and pancakes.

These are the cook-in specials to tickle the palate, and we bet the family will not be satisfied with just one, but just one more!

Photograph : Taiyab Badshah

CORN FRITTERS

1 tin corn kernels
1½ cups flour, sifted
1 tsp. baking powder
¾ tsp. salt
1 egg white
2 egg yolks
1½ tbsps. salad oil
¾ cup milk
Oil for deep frying
2 green chillis, finely chopped
1 tbsp. coriander leaves, chopped

Sift the flour with baking powder and salt. Beat the egg white till stiff. In a separate bowl, beat the egg yolks, milk and salad oil till smooth. Beat in flour gradually till smooth and stir in the drained corn, coriander and chilli. Gently fold in the egg white.

Heat oil. Drop spoonfuls of the mixture at a time and fry on both sides till golden brown. Drain well

BANANA FRITTERS

1 cup flour
1 tbsp. sugar
1 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. salt
2 eggs
½ cup milk
1 tsp. salad oil
½ tsp. vanilla
1 tsp. lemon rind, grated
4 medium sized bananas
Oil for deep frying
Confectioners' sugar
Juice of 1 lemon
A dash nutmeg

Sift the flour with sugar, baking powder and salt. Put eggs, milk, salad oil, vanilla and lemon rind in a bowl and beat till smooth.

Peel and cut the bananas diagonally into half inch pieces. Sprinkle lightly with lemon juice and a dash of nutmeg. Roll pieces lightly in dry flour and dip in batter to coat evenly. Fry in hot oil a few at a time. Drain and serve sprinkled with sugar.

CHICKEN PALACSINTA

2 kg chicken, cut into pieces
Boiling salted water
1 tbsp. butter, melted
1 tbsp. flour
1 cup cream
1 tbsp. butter
A dash paprika
5 tbsps. cheese, grated
1 tbsp. cream, whipped
1 tbsp. parsley, minced
Pancakes or crepes

Cook the chicken in enough boiling salted water over low heat. Cover the pan and cook for one hour or until tender. Cool the chicken, discard the skin and bones and cut the meat into large pieces.

To prepare the sauce: melt one tablespoon butter in a pan and blend in the flour. Slowly add one cup cream, stirring constantly, and cook over low heat until thick. Add one tbsp. butter, a dash of paprika, and the grated cheese. Mix half of the sauce with the chicken and taste for seasoning. Place one tablespoon of the chicken mixture on thin pancakes and roll up. Arrange in a baking dish. Add one tablespoon whipped cream and the parsley, to the remaining sauce and cover the top of the pancakes with this sauce. Bake in a hot oven until brown.

FOR THE PANCAKES:

2 cups flour, sifted
2 tsps. salt
4 eggs, separated
3 cups milk

Combine flour, salt, egg yolks and one cup of milk. Stir until smooth. Gradually stir in the rest of the milk to make a batter consistency. Beat the egg whites until stiff and fold into the batter. Bake full size thin pancakes on an eight inch greased skillet, tipping to spread the batter evenly. Repeat with the rest of the batter.

CHICKEN IN BEER BATTER

2 kg chicken, cut into pieces
1 tsp. salt
½ tsp. black pepper, ground
A dash paprika or chilli powder
1 cup flour
2 eggs
½ to 1 cup beer
2 tbsps. butter, melted
2 tbsps. minced parsley or coriander leaves
Fat for deep frying

Season the chicken pieces with the salt, paprika and pepper. Make a smooth mixture of the flour, eggs and melted butter. Then add as much beer as necessary to make a smooth, rather thick batter. Add the minced parsley or coriander leaves. Coat the chicken pieces with the batter heavily and allow to chill one hour in the refrigerator. Heat the fat. Fry the chicken. Drain and bake in an oven for thirty minutes.

BAMBOO SHOOT PAKODAS

1 bamboo shoot
250 grams flour
1 tsp. chilli powder
½ tsp. pomegranate seeds
Ghee
Salt to taste

Clean and wash the bamboo shoot. Slice finely. Soak in salted water overnight. Next day, drain and wash thoroughly. Now finely chop the bamboo slices. In a mixing bowl, put all the ingredients together and add enough water to make a thick batter. Heat oil or ghee and drop spoonfuls of batter at a time. Brown well, drain and remove.

KHANDVI

2 cups sour curd
2 cups gram flour
6 green chillis
A piece ginger
Coriander leaves, chopped
A little coconut, grated
2 tbsps. sesame oil
1 tsp. mustard seeds
½ tsp. turmeric powder

Beat the curd. Add two cups water and beat. Add gram flour and mix well. Grind the chillis, ginger and turmeric. Add with salt to the flour batter. Stir well. Place on slow fire and stir constantly till fairly thick. Remove from the fire and pour a thin layer of the batter on a greased thali. When cool, cut into strips and roll. Place rolls in a dish. Now heat the oil. Splutter the mustard seeds and pour over the rolls. Garnish with coriander and coconut.

DAHI BOONDI

250 grams gram flour
½ cup water
1 kg curd
A pinch soda bicarb
3 green chillis
1 tbsp. coriander, chopped
1 tsp. cummin seeds
Pepper to taste
A sprig curry leaf
4 tbsps. sesame oil
½ tsp. mustard seeds

Blend the gram flour, water and salt to taste. Add soda bicarb to the above batter. Heat the oil. To prepare boondis use a regular gadget for preparing sev or spaghetti or use a large ladle with medium-size holes. The batter should be a little thin. Fry till golden brown.

Beat up the curds, adding a little water if too thick. Heat one tablespoon oil and fry the mustard seeds and curry leaves. Add the curds mixed with the gram boondis. Serve garnished with coriander.

BONDAS

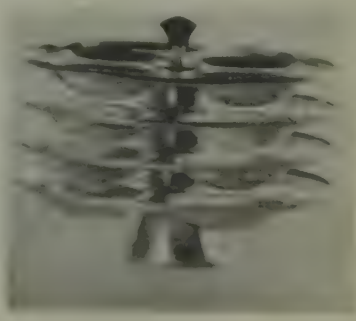
250 grams gram flour
½ cup water
½ kg potatoes
10 green chillis
1 tsp. mustard
3 onions
1 inch piece ginger
½ tsp. turmeric powder
1½ tsps. coriander leaves
1 tbsp. black gram, skinned
½ lemon
250 grams ghee
A sprig curry leaf

Make a batter from gram flour, water and salt to taste. Boil the potatoes, peel and mash well. Chop finely the chillis, onions and ginger. Heat two tablespoons ghee in a pan and fry the mustard seeds and curry leaves. Add onions, chillis, black gram and ginger, and fry for a few minutes. Add the mashed potatoes and stir well. Add salt to taste, lime juice and coriander leaves. Remove from the fire. Allow to cool. Add turmeric and a dash of soda bicarb to the batter. Heat ghee. Make balls of the potato mixture, dip in the batter and deep fry to a golden brown. Serve with chutney.

ANNOUNCING NEW GIFTS FOR OUR COOKERY WINNERS

Prize winners of our Weekly Contest will receive in addition to the usual Rs. 50.00 cash prize:

1) A 9 cup Storefresh container from TRUPTI INDUSTRIES, 2) A gift Hamper from WEIKFIELD containing Elaichi Custard Powder, Jelly Crystals, Drinking Chocolate, Glucose-D, Variety Custard Powder and Corn Flour and, 3) a 4-plate Meera Steam-Thru from MEERA METAL INDUSTRIES, Bombay.



Mrs. Parul Singhal, New Delhi.

WHOLE MEAL SPINACH BISCUITS

10 to 12 leaves spinach
250 grams flour
250 grams ghee
1½ tbsps. sugar
A pinch salt
2 tsps. baking powder
Milk if necessary
10 grams cheese (optional)

Sieve the flour with baking powder and salt. Rub in ghee till the mixture resembles breadcrumbs. Steam the spinach leaves. Cool and mash well. Add to the flour. Sprinkle ground sugar and the grated cheese. Make a stiff dough adding a little milk if required. Roll out to quarter inch thickness on a floured board. Cut into rounds or squares and bake in a moderate oven for ten minutes.

Mrs. Blanche Noronha, Madras.

COCONUT CARROT CAKE

1½ cups flour
1 cup sugar, powdered
1 level tsp. baking powder
1 level tsp. soda bicarb
¼ tsp. salt
¼ tsp. nutmeg, powdered
¼ tsp. cardamom, powdered (optional)
1 cup milk
2 tbsps. semolina
1 cup refined oil
2 eggs
1 tsp. vanilla essence
1 cup coconut, grated
1 cup carrot, shredded
½ cup walnuts, chopped
½ cup dates, chopped
½ cup apple, chopped and soaked in 2 tbsps. honey

Sift the flour with the baking powder, soda bicarb, and salt together three times. Then mix in the semolina and put in a bowl with the powdered sugar and the spices. Beat the eggs till frothy with the essence and mix it in the bowl with the flour and sugar. Then pour in the oil, milk and stir well till mixed. Spread the chopped fruits (except the apple) on a paper and sprinkle a little flour over it. Mix thoroughly. Stir into the flour bowl. Beat till well mixed. Pour into two greased and floured tins. Bake in a moderate oven for thirty to forty minutes.

Mrs. Kavita Thadani, Poona.

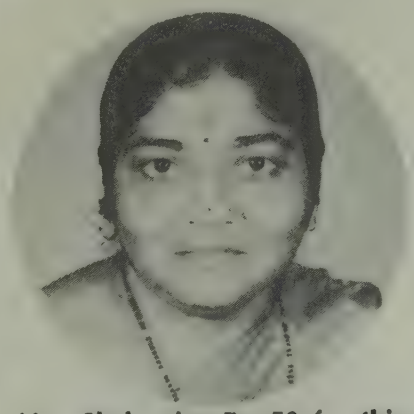
CORN ON THE COB

6 tender corns
1 cup cream
1 cup curds (sweet)
1 pod garlic, flaked
1½ inch ginger
5-6 green chillis
¼ coconut
6 tomatoes
1 tsp. sugar
½ tsp. red chilli
1 tbsp. coriander powder
½ tsp. turmeric powder
2 tbsps. cooking oil
1 tsp. garam masala
¾ cup water

Boil the corns in the pressure cooker till tender. Keep aside. Grind the ginger, garlic, green chillis, coconut and tomatoes, to a fine paste. In a pan heat the oil and fry the paste. Stir well, then add the curds and cream. Whisk for about five to ten minutes. Add the red chillis, coriander, garam masala, turmeric powder and sugar. Add little water.

Finally add the corn and cook till the mixture thickens. Serve hot

RANJAN SHAH, Bombay.



Mrs. Shah wins Rs. 50 for this week's best recipe plus a 9 cup Storefresh container from Trupti Industries, a gift hamper from Weikfield and a 4 plate Meera Steam-thru from Meera Metal Industries, Bombay.

GUAVA BHAJI

6 guavas
2 tbsps. oil
50 grams "farsan papadi"
A small bunch coriander leaves
A little coconut, grated
2 tsps. coriander and cummin powder
½ tsp. saffron powder
A little jaggery to taste
1 tsp. garam masala
Salt to taste

A little mustard seeds, cummin, fenugreek, groundnuts and curry leaves.

Cut the ripe guavas into small cubes. Heat the oil in a thick bottomed dekchi. Add the mustard seeds, cummin, fenugreek, groundnuts and curry leaves. Add the cubes. Keep on a slow fire. Add all the spices, stir slowly. Finally add the crushed "farsan papadi".

When the mixture cools, transfer into a serving dish. Garnish with coconut and coriander.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Monthly Cookery Queen Contest

All cookery contestants for the Monthly Cookery Contest have to send in their recipes, non-vegetarian or vegetarian according to the subjects specified for each month. Out of seven best selected entries, one Monthly Queen and one Weekly Winner will be selected. The remaining five recipes will be published along with the winning recipes. We give below subjects for the coming three months to enable you to send in your entries well in advance.

March, 1981
SPINACH SPECIALITIES

April, 1981
VEGETABLE PUDDINGS

May, 1981
PICKLES

All entries for March should reach us latest by February 5, April entries by March 5 and May entries by April 5, 1981

COOKERY CONTEST RULES

1. Each recipe must be accompanied by this coupon.
2. The author of each selected entry will be informed in advance and requested to send a passport size photograph of herself to be published along with her recipe.
3. The recipe must be original and not copied from a cookery book, a magazine or any other published material. The prize-winner shall have to sign a declaration to that effect before the announcement is made and the prize awarded.

Address your entries to the Cookery Editor, Eve's Weekly, Bombay Samachar Marg Bombay-400 023.

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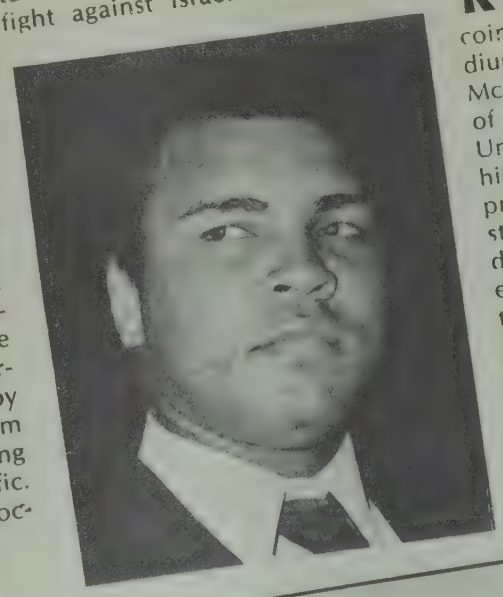
THE most unexpected people turn up in India to seek solace with the godmen here. **Shannon Ryan,** the 28-year-old daughter of Senator Leo Ryan, has become a sanyasin with Bhagwan Rajneesh, and has taken on the new name of **Ma Amrita Pritam.** Leo Ryan, if you remember, was on a fact finding mission to Jonestown, Guyana, when he was shot and killed by the paranoid followers of Jim Jones. Later, more than 900 followers of the cult committed suicide by swallowing cyanide mixed with a synthetic fruit drink, which was one of the greatest tragedies of 1978.

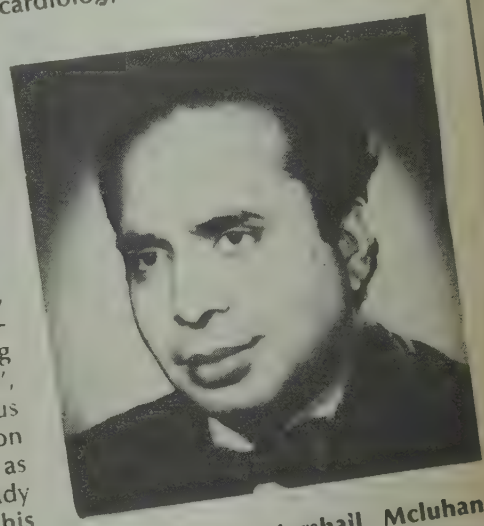
Talking of her father's death, Amrita Pritam said, "It was a tremendous shock to me when my father was killed. His murder and the events which surrounded it were by far the most difficult things I've had to deal with in my life, and Bhagwan has helped me get over the paranoia and fear that followed." The encounter and meditation courses in which she participated helped her to rediscover her love and trust in other human beings, she says — "I feel such a sense of freedom." She feels that her father would have approved of her taking sanyas, and what she's doing today is her way of paying a tribute to her father.

IT was the kind of wedding petty bourgeoise revisionists would have had. But it was hardly befitting the daughter of a CPM stalwart. In India, politicians lead a schizophrenic life. In public they rave and rant about the heartless rich and talk with feeling about the suffering poor. In private, their lifestyles match only that of the rich and the powerful. And so also with Kerala Home Minister **P. K. Ramakrishnan.** He recently celebrated his daughter's wedding by inviting hundreds of people to the TDM hall, Cochin. The lavish arrangements were supervised by groups of policemen in uniform and in 'mufti', with high ranking officials controlling the traffic. And of course the cream of society was there, because the CPM minister, who has sworn to destroy capitalistic society, was getting his daughter married to a well-known tycoon!

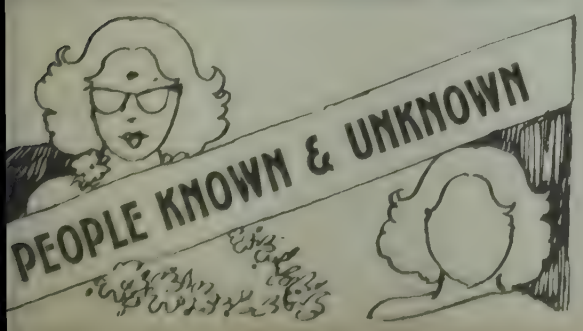
THE latest guy to take to the robe is Imam **Mohammad Ali,** ex-boxing champ. An imam, in case you aren't well up on Islam, is a missionary of that faith. When Ali does anything, he does it with flamboyance. It's the same with his conversion bid too. He plans to preach Islam to Europeans by renting the biggest auditorium in London. He also hopes to preach in European churches before leaving for Malaysia, where he intends to address 40,000 faithful in 5,000 mosques. The former champ said that he studies the Koran for seven hours every day, adding: "Happiness can only be found in loving god, and what I'm doing today is greater than boxing." A militant Muslim convert for 10 years, Ali's excuse for his third marriage is that his previous two wives didn't follow Islamic principles. To Ali, movies, like boxing, is to be used to spread the doctrine of Islam, so he's acting in a film called 'Freedom Road', in which there are no "impious references". And of course on the political plane, he has as usual announced that he's ready to help any Arab leader in his fight against Israel.



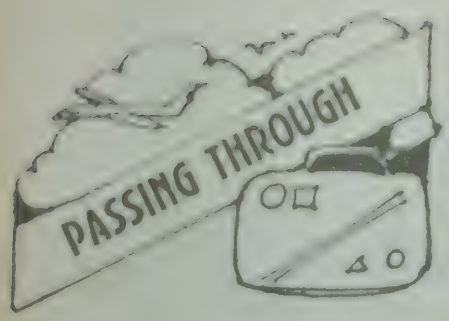
AFTER the suave glamorous film actor Dilip Kumar made many a heart flutter, we have another kind of heart specialist as the new Sheriff of Bombay. **Dr. B. K. Goyal** (46), an internationally acknowledged authority on heart diseases, also finds time to do social work in spite of his multifarious activities. Among such activities that keep him busy are as publisher, Indian Heart Journal and founder-president of the Dhanvantari Foundation. He has led many delegations abroad, chaired medical conventions in the city and edited and written several books on cardiology.



REMEMBER **Marshall Mcluhan** the guru of the media, who coined the phrase, "a cool medium" for TV in the sixties? Mr. Mcluhan, who was a professor of English literature at Toronto University for 34 years, died in his sleep on New Year's eve. A prolific writer, his books "Understanding Media" and "The Medium Is The Message' made an enormous impression on the critics of his era. They basically analysed the impact of modern mass media on contemporar life. His conclusions, with tellin examples, pointed out that tel vision and other informatic media had radically changed h man life, especially in the We



MANMOHAN Desai, the 'lost and found' formula expert of Hindi films, would have loved the story. Murugan, now a 13-year-old boy from a village in Tamil Nadu, disappeared from his home more than eight years ago. The North Madras Lions Club took an interest in the case, did a bit of detective work, and traced Murugan to Chandigarh. He was brought back to Madras in style, where more than 500 people turned up to meet him. After a tearful reunion, Murugan revealed that he had been kidnapped by a group of lepers who had wanted to use him for smuggling activities. He escaped from them and finally found work with P. L. Sethi, an executive with a chemical firm. Having gone through the ordeal of meeting his parents, the Hindi-speaking Murugan finally put his foot down about living with them in their village, and said that he was returning to his old master Sethi, in Chandigarh, whom he calls 'sethji', because in their household he is treated like a member of the family. He has however promised to send money to his old parents regularly.



DREAM MACHINE

ENTERTAINING IN STYLE

They couldn't have chosen a better time to visit India than now, when the disco fever is at its zenith. This rage is most evident everywhere — even in our films, where a disco scene is a must these days. Everyone is cashing in on this epidemic and it was against this backdrop that the Dream Machine arrived in Bombay with a bang. Flown in specially from London for the festive season, they have given a series of pulsating performances at the Welcomehotel Searock.

Formed in May 1980, this trio has performed in the U.K., Bahrain, Malta and Lagos and are now in India for the first time. Leading the Machine is Ray Cornell, the internationally famous singer, dancer and choreographer. Ray has to his credit big productions like "Showboat" and "Cole". Accompanying him are two lovely female vocalists Candice and Vivien.

How do they find our Indian audiences? "Well, they have been very good to us — very receptive," says Ray but on New Year's Eve, the exuberence and loud behaviour which are part and parcel of New Year's Eve obviously distracted them a lot, but that has in no way dampened their spirit.

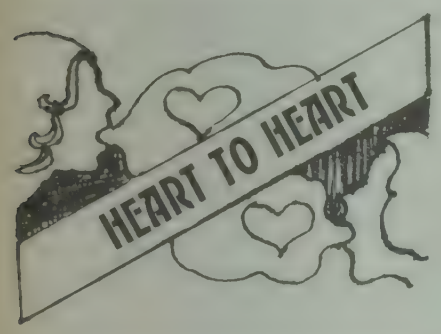
For a group that has come together only recently, they have been doing rather well and have been complementing each other in several aspects to put forth a harmonious blend of electrifying music. Back home they won the song and dance category in the BBC series "Rising Stars" and what's more, they have also recorded a song for the Eurovision Song Contest one of the most prestigious events out there.

One of the original "Sunshine Girls", Candice has only recently joined the group. What type of music do they go in for? "Not of any particular type really," says Candice. Their range includes the good ole music of the 20's, right up to current funkie pop

numbers. Operating behind the scenes is Darrel Bevers, the debonair manager of the group. Thoroughly professional in all respects, the Dream Machine go in for dazzling constume changes during their shows interspersed with dance sequences.

What are her impressions of India, I asked Viv, "Oh it's fascinating," she gushed and as I bid them goodbye before they boarded the aircraft for Hyderabad, I sincerely hoped that all of them would carry back the same impressions after their tour of our country.

Aruna Mallya



Confide your personal problems to Mrs. Kamlesh Nischol, c/o Eve's Weekly. Mrs. Nischol is a leading psychologist and marriage counsellor and will answer your queries every fortnight.

MOTHER-IN-LAW PROBLEM

TALK IT OVER WITH HER

I am a young woman of 28 years. I have been married for six years now and have a child of four years. Since last year I have started working in an office. Both my parents-in-law stay with us and they had been happy. But since a month, my mother-in-law has been peevish with me. She gets annoyed if I go out with my husband in the evening or discipline my child.

In India today, more and more couples in the urban set-up are living independent of their parents. This pattern has both advantages as well as disadvantages. It is possible that your mother-in-law feels that after taking up a job you are taking her for granted. After all she looks after your child when you are away and she does expect you to give her free time when you return. If however, you decide to go out again with your husband, she is naturally going to feel bad. Perhaps it would be a good idea if you plan your outings in consultation with your mother-in-law. The older people should not feel that they are welcome only when needed.

Your conflict in respect to child rearing is a very common phenomenon. Being impatient or disagreeing with her is futile and might have an adverse effect on the child. Talking it over with her might help. She may be giving vent to her anger by condoning your child's indiscipline.

SHE IS IN A DILEMMA

I am a post-graduate student. Coming from an orthodox Hindu family, I find the conversation and actions of a lot of our boys and girls shocking. They seem to live for sex and have little moral restraint. I feel like a fish out of water. Is compromise the answer?

I understand your dilemma of wanting to be one of the group and yet not wanting to give up your ideals. During the period of transition which our society is going through, the young are inclined to flout traditions. Some among them do believe in "sowing their wild oats" forgetting the harvest this will yield.

Answering your question about compromise, all I can say is that if you do so you will be the loser. The very persons whose pressures compel you to compromise, will despise you. In their heart of hearts they admire your courage to stand by your convictions.

However, don't be a prude or snob. Be pleasant but avoid compromising your convictions.

MISERABLE WIFE

My husband is unfaithful to me — I am told he is running around with teenagers. We have a 10-year-old son. I am miserable. Please advise.

You have not mentioned your husband's age, but such antics are not unusual for a man who is entering into waning manhood. His tendency is to blame his truancy on the irresponsiveness of his mate and, blind to his own condition, he seeks stimulation elsewhere.

Women too pass through a stage when they become very suspicious of their husband. When the days of productiveness come to an end, the first thought is: Will my husband seek companionship elsewhere? Many marriages have broken up at this point.

First make sure that your suspicions are justified. Face this problem in a mature way — the chances are you can work it out

WOMEN'S HEALTH: the sexist bias in medicine

Padma Prakash

If you have ever been ill and had occasion to visit a clinic, dispensary or hospital, you will have experienced some degree of fright, even terror, helplessness and frustration. Most women dread any contact with the health services — the prodding and poking of their bodies by hands that treat them as so much flesh, the meaningless questions asked and the desultory replies that they are sure to give. And they agonise over their inability to communicate their health needs to the white robed figure who professes to know so much but can do so little for them.

Medicine, by the very definition of a woman, disregards most of her health needs. It has long regarded all women as mothers or potential mothers. Faced with women's health problems which cannot be linked with their reproductive functions, modern medical practice can only temporise. This inherent bias of medicine, which is sexist and reflects masculine needs, affects us women as users of health services.

"MEDICAL SCIENCE HAS ALWAYS REFLECTED THE NEEDS AND IDEAS OF THE DOMINANT SEX."

Medicine began as a collection of popular folk practices of curing and healing. As it grew into a science, it rejected all those practices and notions which could not fit into its new "scientific" perspective. Its history is a record of the dominant concepts and ideologies of society. The accepted theories of medical science, the machine concept of the human body, the germ theory, etc. were all relevant to the dominant social demands of the day. Medical science has also always reflected the needs and ideas of the dominant sex.

The "normal" woman of medical science is a "feminine" woman. The stereotype of "Mother" and "Sex Object" has been dominant in medicine since the nineteenth century. Notions of sexual romanticism of the day demanded that a woman be a negation of the harsh workaday world of Man. The gentle, frail, irrational, invalid woman became the ideal of the period. Inertia, lethargy and a general air of being sick were considered the "normal' characteristics of a genteel woman. These women became the ideal patients. Respected medical opinion even argued that the best results of lengthy medical treatment could only be obtained with proper care, rest and nourishment which only the upper class could afford.

"NOTIONS OF THE FRAIL UPPER CLASS WOMAN WHO WAS PERPETUALLY ILL, AND THE ROBUST WORKING CLASS WOMAN, HAVE BECOME THE BASIS OF ALL THEORIES OF WOMEN'S HEALTH."

In the same period, illnesses of poor women caused by their terrible living and working conditions were largely ignored. In any case, it was pointed out that their lifestyles made lengthy medical treatment impossible. These notions of the frail upper class woman who was perpetually ill and the robust working class woman to whom illness was of little consequence, have become the basis of all subsequent theories of women's health and illness. These were without a doubt, reflections of the dominant class and the dominant sex in society

In that same period, normal functions of the female body were "medicalised." Menstruation was considered a constant threat to women's health and women were advised to treat these "monthly returns" as periods of ill health. Pregnancy was redefined as a pathological condition. A woman's "great vocation" and the "august purpose of her existence" were procreation. While her "sex function" was emphasised, notions of female sexuality were frowned upon as being unwomanly.

A woman was defined as a human being built around a uterus, which was identified as the controlling organ of the female body. All health ailments of women — sore throats, headache, indigestion, irritability and insanity, were attributed to the malfunctioning of the ovaries, or more generally, the reproductive organs. Nascent medical science made women's reproductive organs the main target of treatment for any and all of women's problems. One treatment prescribed was the placing of leeches at the neck of the uterus. It was claimed that the leeches fell off when satiated, although some did tend to wander into the cervical cavity of the uterus causing excruciating pain! The injection of a variety of fluids such as milk, water and linseed tea into the uterus and the removal of the clitoris were some of the other "cures" that women were subjected to.

While these nauseating practices have disappeared, the perspective of women's health which they embodied is very much a part of modern medical theory and practice. Women's health disorders are treated symptomatically, with little comprehensive knowledge of the normal functioning of the female body. For instance, backache, which is the most common of women's complaints, is treated with pain killers and injections. But what causes it and why women suffer from it so commonly, has hardly been investigated. A recent book on menstruation points out that there is no real agreement among authorities as to the actual mechanism of the normal menstrual cycle. Although pain and discomfort are the lot of most women at or during periods, medical science has no satisfactory explanation for them and can only assert that they do occur.

"THE LONG LIST OF WOMEN'S NON-SPECIFIC COMPLAINTS IS NEATLY DISPOSED OF AS NEUROTIC SYMPTOMS. NEVER, AT ANY PERIOD OF SOCIAL HISTORY, HAVE WOMEN'S HEALTH PROBLEMS ARISING OUT OF THEIR NON-REPRODUCTIVE ACTIVITIES ATTRACTED MEDICAL ATTENTION."

The logic is complete. Pain is part of womanhood. To be a woman is to suffer menstrual cramp, bodyache, anaemia... Their causes are inherent in the very physiology of the female body and cannot therefore be eliminated.

The sexist bias of modern medicine has consequences for all women, as health functionaries women doctors and nurses together with their male colleagues absorb and internalise this ideology. In the course of their long training, they absorb the masculine interpretations of women's bodies and women'r health. If women have to succeed in the atmosphere of male hegemony that exists within the health establishment, they have to necessarily accept unquestioningly, the sexist bias in medicine. In effect, they learn to "masculinise" their attitudes to women patients and to their problems. Childbirth is stripped of its emotional and psychological import and becomes a painful physical process. Abortion is a horrifying experience and the long list of women's non-specific complaints is neatly disposed of as neurotic symptoms. Never at any period of social history have women's health problems arising out of their non-reproductive activities attracted medical attention. At this point one might well ask why, if women's health problems are those that are unrelated to their reproductive functions, this fact is not reflected in hospital statistics? Most hospital data show that excluding maternity cases, only a quarter of all patients are women. Pregnancy is undoubtedly the major contact point between women and the health care system. Women's health problems appear to be trapped in a vicious circle. Because women instinctively or perhaps through past experience realise that medical practice recognises women only as procreators, they make use of the health services most consistently when their complaints are related to their reproductive functionr. Thereby they substantiate and continuously reinforce the sexist assumption that all health problems of women originate from their reproductive roles.

Continued on page 54

THE MYSTERY AT GUL MOHAR

Continued from page 31

must have forgotten to lock it yesterday! she thought.

Rita scanned the shelves carefully, feeling around, lifting garments, but the missing doll was not to be found. No broken pieces, either. And nothing else that could throw light on the mystery. For a mystery it was, she was certain.

Outside it was getting brighter each minute. Time was running out and Aunt Sheela would be up soon. In a final effort Rita flashed her torch on Blackie. She started slightly as the amber eyes stared back at her. She patted Blackie's smooth head as if that might help her to think.

But it was no use. She just could not think of any solution. There was nothing in the room that would appear to be of help.

So busy was she with her thoughts that Rita failed to hear the faint click on the door till it swung open. With a start she discovered a figure standing in the doorway. It was covered from head to foot in a white sheet with only two small openings where the eyes were.

The ghost!

Rita almost screamed, but controlled herself with a supreme effort.

Then, as she turned the beam of light on to the figure, it made to flee. And Rita realised it was not a ghost.

The person was wearing red sandals.

She decided to give chase, dashing out into the garden, looking this way and that.

But there was no one in sight!

The person must have gone round the house on the side of Aunt Sheela's private garden, Rita decided, and raced away at once. Panting, she rounded the hedge of morning glory — and came face to face with Aunt Sheela!

"What are you doing?" Aunt Sheela demanded, grabbing her by the arm.

Her fingers bit into Rita's flesh till Rita almost cried out with the pain.

"Aunty!" Rita spoke breathlessly. "There was someone in Didima's room. I heard footsteps and went to look. But the person has gone."

"Someone in Didima's room! There can't be. You're not speaking the truth."

"I am. Come and see. The door is open. The person was wearing red sandals."

"Red sandals! It can't be. The only person who wore red sandals usually was Boorie. And she's not here any more."

Though disbelieving, her Aunt hastened to check, almost racing Rita off her feet as she dragged her along.

There was a surprise waiting when they got there. For the door to Didima's room was locked as if no one had entered.

Rita stared at it in disbelief.

"Just as I thought!" Aunt Sheela spoke grimly. "You've been making up stories."

"But I have not!" Rita protested angrily. "Please, Aunty, please believe me!" she begged.

"As you can see, the door is locked," Aunt Sheela pointed out. "If this happens again I shall have to send you away."

Send her away! That was the last thing she wanted. Rita was more confident now that there was a mystery at Gul Mohar. One that concerned Didima and Didima's room. **Her** Didima, who had meant so much to her!

She must stay till the mystery was solved. She started to plead at once.

"Aunty, please forgive me! I must have been mistaken. Please do not send me away. I'm very happy here with you."

Of course, Rita did not know that her aunt had no intention of sending her away. At least not just yet.

So, Aunt Sheela agreed, sounding very forgiving.

"All right then. But you must promise not to make up such stories again. And keep away from Didima's room."

"I promise!" said Rita.

Who was the stranger Rita kept wondering, who had locked Didima's front door? Could it have been the stranger? Or did the stranger have an accomplice? She wished she knew.

Then, once the meal was over, and she was alone with her aunt helping to clear the table, Rita found the courage to ask one question aloud.

"Aunty, who is Boorie?"

"Boorie! How do you know about Boorie?" asked Aunt Sheela suspiciously.

"I don't know about her, but you said she was the only person who wore red sandals," Rita pointed out.

"Oh, that!" Aunt Sheela paused. "Boorie was the woman who looked after your Didima when she was ill, some time before she died. She was a wicked old woman. I disliked her. I had to get rid of her soon after."

"I see!" was Rita's only comment. Though at once she was thinking, why had Aunt Sheela disliked Boorie?

To be continued

CAN YOU HEAR SILENCE?

Continued from page 23

go to the toilet. I envy Rashmi and Chhaya for being peacefully asleep. I wish I could go to sleep too, and wake up in the morning to find Papa shaving at the small mirror propped in a corner of the window.

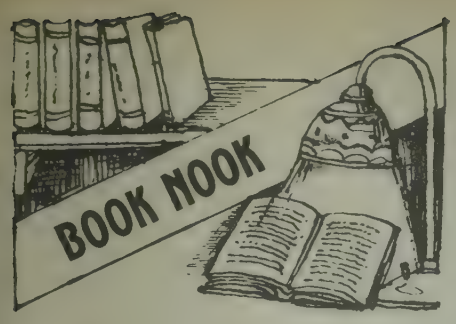
Finally, when I've given up all hope, I hear his step. Mummy gets up instantly. I hear him taking off his shoes, putting away his umbrella. Mummy asks him something. He replies softly as if he's afraid of waking us, but when Mummy goes on, his voice gets louder. I close my eyes tight and grow cold. Don't make him angry, Mummy, I plead. It's terrible when he's angry. He doesn't see us, he doesn't look at us, he goes about as if we're all ghosts. And Mummy does look like a ghost. . . an angry ghost, that is. As the angry words go on, I pray. . . let it be the kind of quarrel that doesn't last. Sometimes, it doesn't. I wake up in the morning after a quarrel and for a moment there's nothing, then there's me, and the day, and I'm happy. Then I remember the quarrel and the happy feeling goes away. But when I get out of bed, it's all peaceful. There's Papa shaving, squinting at himself in the mirror, whistling when he finishes and goes off to wash his shaving things. And Mummy is in the kitchen, looking young in her nightdress, her hair in two plaits. She's rushing about, but I can see that it's a kind of happy rushing about, not an angry, holding-herself-in kind of thing. But some days it goes on and on and the house seems to be full of anger and I feel as if the walls are pressing in on us.

Now their voices are like small hurting stones. I put my fingers in my ears to keep out the sounds. My wrists and fingers start paining and I remove my fingers. There's silence. But this silence seems even more terrible than the angry voices. Maybe it's better than those whispers, though. The whispers that I sometimes hear from the other side of the curtain. When I hear them I think of what Suchitra in our class had once told me, her eyes gleaming, her face excited in a nasty sort of way. And then I hate Suchitra and myself and my parents and everyone and I wish I had a room of my very own. Does Rashmi also feel the same? Because one day she said, "I'm going to sleep in the gallery." "Can you sleep standing up?" Papa had asked her laughing. The gallery has room only for brooms, brushes, old tins and other junk. But Rashmi had kept on and on, even measuring the gallery, and Papa had said, "Maybe one day, when we get out of here, you can have your own room. . ."

And Mummy had asked, "Will we?" And that night I had heard them arguing once again, with Mummy saying, "No, no."

I wake up with a start to find that my pillow has slipped off and my neck feels stiff. I grope for it and put it back, wondering . . . is it time to wake up? Then I hear the sounds of running water and I know it's still night. We get water in the taps only at night and Mummy and Papa have to store it up then. They work in silence. Only occasionally I hear them say something in a husky, middle-of-the-night voice. Soon the sounds cease. The lights are switched off. And there is silence.

But only in our house. Outside I can hear the trucks rumbling past. From a distance comes the hoot of a train. Soon the milk vans will start. The tramp tramp of factory workers going to work. People going for milk. The buses. These sounds don't trouble me, though. I'm used to them. They tell me I'm at home in my own bed. And it feels good and comfortable even if I'm on the "camel." But just as I'm drifting back into sleep. . . and I must. I've got to get up early to be ready in time for the school bus . . . I see a picture in front of my closed eyes. A house with a tiled roof. The rain falling on it with a soft patter. A bird sitting silent and still. And I think of Mummy's words and wonder . . . can you hear silence? Will I ever hear it one day?



What is being written by or about women?
On this page every month we bring you a review of some of the books published recently.

CULT OF THE GODDESS by Dr. James J. Preston; Vikas Publishing House; price Rs. 50.

It is more than half a century since Nietzsche made the outrageous statement "God is dead." Yet, despite the growing ranks of intellectual agnostics, religion retains its hold on the common man's mind. India has always been a stronghold of religious sentiment and, even today, Westerners continue to flock to ashrams as diverse and disparate in their practices as the people themselves.

American anthropologist James J. Preston has undertaken to study the cult of the goddess in Hinduism — its precept, meaning and validity today. He puts forward the view that Hinduism is neither doomed to extinction nor is it resistant to change, but rather that it has an inherent adaptive capacity that can even make it a spearhead in the modernizing process. Examining the social, cultural and religious polemics that have made a small temple at Cuttack, Orissa, grow into the most widely attended religious institution in the city, Dr. Preston searches for the thread that weaves religion into everyday life.

The women's movement in the West has made people conscious that feminine symbolism has largely been ignored or repressed in Chritianity with the exception of Catholicism's worship of Virgin Mary. In contrast, Hinduism gives equal importance to male and female deities with both containing benign and malevolent (passive and aggressive) qualities. The great goddess can manifest herself in different forms under different conditions. As Kali she represents an aggressive potential. As Parvati she personifies love and nurture. As Durga she is part mother, protecting and nurturing her devotees and at the same time has the capacity to ruthlessly destroy her enemies. Another concept maintains that gods and men do not exist in separate realities. Rather figures of deities are kept in homes, bathed and fed regularly to suggest an overlapping plane of consciousness. Encapsuled into these two concepts is the fundamental idea that like gods, human beings too, have the capacity to transform themselves by going back to an inner source.

Mr. Preston is impressed by the life-affirming quality of the Shakti cult which contrasts starkly with the self-denial demanded by Christianity. The five sacraments of the panchamakara puja include 1) mamsa (eating meat) 2) mithuna (sexual union) 3) matsya (eating fish)) 4) madya (drinking wine) and 5) mudra (hand gestures). The sex act is seen as an instrument for the integration of male and female qualities symbolizing the union of opposites. Today in deference to prevailing values, the original sacraments have been replaced by symbolic substitutes. Yet modern concepts do not reflect a fundamental break with the past. Traditionally, gods have been feared and respected. Goddesses have been loved and endowed with human frailties. They offer hope where there is doubt and fear.

Today, with the breakdown of traditional royal patronage, temples are increasingly forced to become commercial. Dr. Preston asks the pertinent question: Is commercialism a threat to the values enshrined in religion? Or is it just another step in adapting Hinduism to socio-economic realities? He concludes on the positive note that "If there is one principle common to Hinduism it is this great resilience, a refusal to be vanquished despite constant waves of threatening political and ideological systems from the outside. It is almost paradoxical that the major integrating factor of Hinduism is its very tolerance for diversity through a constant process of incorporation. Other religions would be torn apart by so much variability. Hinduism thrives on it."

Dr. Preston's deep involvement with his subject is evident in almost every page of the book. He is not another dilettante Westerner hanging around a Rajneesh-like ashram. His description of an animal sacrifice is coloured with sensitivity, respect and understanding, for he does not stop at seeing a ritual but looks into it searching for deeper meanings.

This is a book for both believers and non-believers, but mainly to social scientists interested in the evolution of one of the oldest religions in the world.

THE DARK HOLDS NO TERRORS by Shashi Deshpande; Vikas Publishing House; price Rs. 45.

Few writers are capable of writing fiction aimed at totally different audiences. Admittedly Shashi Deshpande's books for children reviewed in these columns earlier leave much to be desired. But her work takes on a different quality when it addresses itself to an adult readership. "The Dark Holds No Terrors" is her first novel. Though it deals with a woman's growing consciousness, it is not blatent in its feminist approach. Here is a woman oppressed not by society but by herself. As she alternately attempts to escape her environment or to seek alternative avenues for fulfilment, she keeps coming up against the ghosts of her past. Eventually she arrives at the realization that there can be no peace for her till she has made peace with herself, within herself.

Sarita is a successful professional woman who commits the grievous marital crime of earning more than her husband. She is married to Manohar, once a promising poet whose poetry has been whittled down by social and economic pressures. Theirs was an idyllic run-away marriage. But as Manohar watches his young wife graduate from medical school to build up a successful medical practice while he remains just another college professor, their relationship gets weighed down by a backlog of things left unsaid. Here we confront the modern man's dilemma. Intellectually he can accept his wife's professional status. But can he accept it emotionally? And in the dark of the bedroom Manohar becomes transformed into a savage, sadistic monster. Her mother's death provides Sarita with the pretext to return home for the first time in several years. This proves to be a violent confrontation with a self she thought she had discarded. She becomes acquainted with her father a stranger she had never known. She relives the trauma of her brother's death. And she tastes the poison of her mother's hatred as she is blamed for having caused it. The childhood ties with neighbours and friends dissolve into nothing more than caricatures of old photographs.

Sarita's is essentially the story of a woman coming to terms with her aloneness. To break away from the traumas of childhood she escapes into a marriage whose bliss is short-lived. To escape her dichotomized husband she returns to her father to find peace an illusion. Finally, as she discovers her own burden of fears that raises a wall between herself and other people she asks herself vital questions: What does self-awareness imply for a woman? What is the price of success? Is it worth the repercussions? On herself? On her man? And finally does liberation mean substituting social oppression for an indefinable self-oppression?

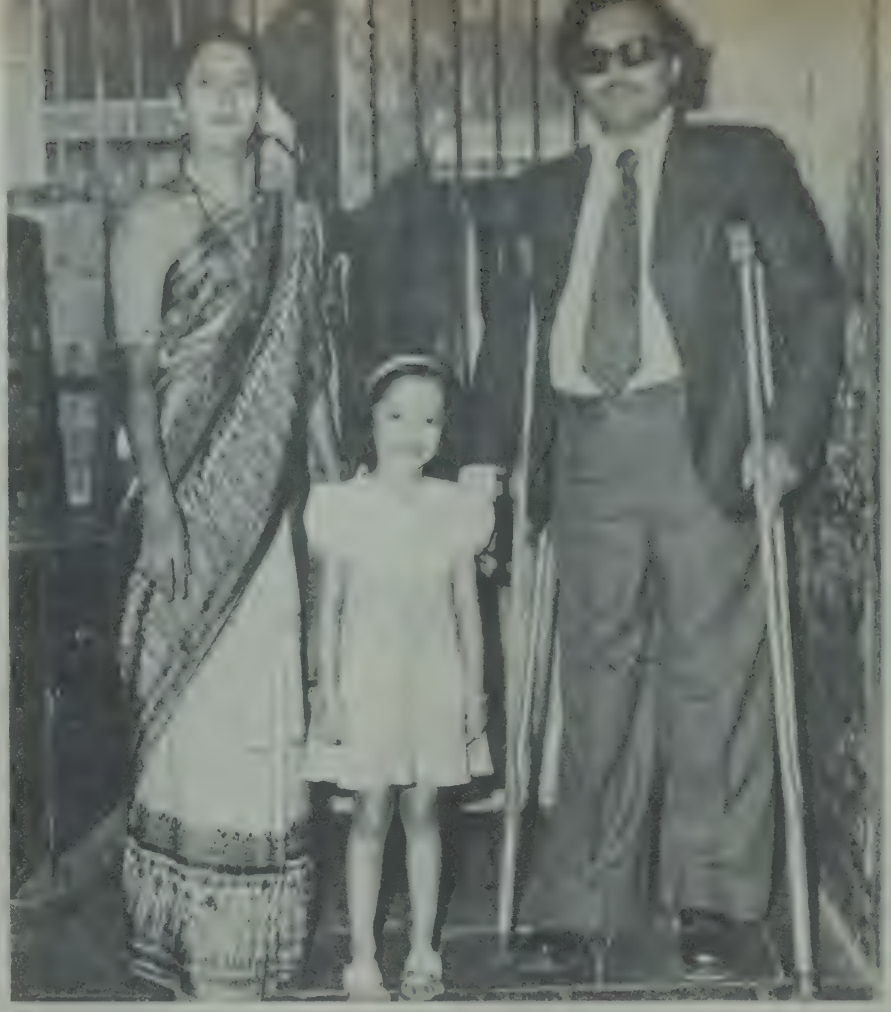
The present generation is caught up in the confusions and conflicts implicit in defining a direction for growth. Perhaps only a future generation can sort out women's identity crisis.

Meher Pestonji

ANSWERS TO EVE'S WEEKLY QUIZ NO. 17

1. Mr. Nelson Rockfeller
2. Messrs. T.E. Srinivasan, Yograj, Kirti Azad
3. Mr. Vijay Tendulkar
4. Uruguay
5. Pt. Ravi Shankar
6. Marilyn Monroe
7. No award that year
8. Genetics (the study of heredity)
9. Eskimos, American Indians (Red Indians) and Russians respectively
10. Sir Francis Drake
11. Mr. Nirad C. Chaudari
12. Japan

The prize money of Rs. 200 is divided among 23 readers who sent all-correct solutions by the deadline.



LEFT: The Poudvales: "It makes no difference to our married life."

THE SPECIAL FRIENDSHIP OF THE DISABLED

MARRIAGE IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF EMOTIONAL REHABILITATION FOR HANDICAPPED PEOPLE. RECOGNISING THIS, ONE WOMAN SETS OUT TO PLAY CUPID

Preeth I. Biddapa

Handicapped bodies can have beautiful minds. Sadly, this escapes the imagination of society. The fact that disabled people have normal emotional and psychological needs is often beyond comprehension. The very word "handicapped" conjures up visions of ugliness, deformities, and dependence. Consequently, handicapped people are starved for love and companionship. Physical and vocational rehabilitation are obviously insufficient for growth of personality. Emotional rehabilitation is equally, if not more, important.

Striving to change society's treatment of the handicapped, almost single handedly, is Shobha Kanvinde, who describes herself jokingly as "a statue of the All India Institute of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation". A victim of polio at three, Shobha was physically rehabilitated at the Institute and went on to become its telephone operator in 1968. She has been there ever since.

The Institute helps rehabilitate physically handicapped people, from "the bed to a job," she said In this sense she has become a fixture at the institution. She stands out as an inspiration to countless disabled on account of her extraordinary efforts to help handicapped people, socially and emotionally, in adjusting to and being accepted by society. Today her name is synonymous with the marriage bureau that she runs at Dadar.

Radiating cheerful vibes from her seat as telephone operator, she attracted many sorrowing parents who came to the Institute with disabled children for relief. "They used to say," says Shobha, "if my child can be like you, there is some hope." She herself has the use of only one leg and one arm. Yet, this is hardly noticeable in the aura of warmth that envelops her.

Shobha soon became friend and confidante of the patients, unreservedly reaching out and helping them grow and mature emotionally as they gradually got rehabilitated physically and vocationally at the Institute. "Society is often uncooperative," says Shobha.

Disability fills most normal people with either revulsion or pity. Normal communication between the disabled and the able becomes difficult on account of these mental reservations. Shobha, who is not married, confesses "I never got married because I kept hoping that a normal person would want to marry me." She soon realised that it was easier for handicapped people to mix socially and marry among themselves as they understood each other's difficulties better than normal people could.

Apanga Maitri (Friendship of the Disabled) was started by this indomitable lady on 20th March 1977—Gudi Padva day—with 14 members. Today it has over 500 members. Since no attempts worth the name were made by the able bodied, to meet the hopes and aspirations of the handicapped, Shobha Kanvinde took it upon herself to play Cupid, and started arranging matrimonial alliances.

Wanting to get married, have children, set up a happy home, is as natural a desire among handicapped people as among the normal. Concentrating on filling the void in the hearts of these human beings this remarkable woman made lists of the handicapped people, their educational qualifications, background (caste, community), age, standard of living, physical conditions i.e. whether a woman could manage household duties, whether a man could move around easily, etc. She explained how she tried to bring together people suffering from complementary handicaps, for easy adjustment in marriage. But other considerations such as religious background, caste and outlook also had to be satisfied, Indian society being as conservative as it is. Even then several difficulties in arranging alliances arose. Sometimes just persuading parents of the need to satisfy their handicapped sons' and daughters' urge for marriage was an insurmountable problem. After getting them to agree to marriage, they would raise objections to having another handicapped person in the family as a son-in-law or daughter-in-law.

"It is considered bad enough to have one handicapped person in the house," they would point out, "why bring in another?"

Arranged marriages in this context, between normal and handicapped people, are not as successful as "love marriages" between the handicapped, which are more enduring, achieving an extraordinary degree of closeness uncommon among normal married couples. Sympathy, so necessary for a good marriage, is often quite strong between handicapped people.

Suresh was disabled. Yet his mother spurned Shobha's efforts at getting him married to Sunita, a highly qualified doctor, who was similarly disabled. She arranged for a normal girl who brought in a dowry of Rs. 60,000. After a few months, the girl left with her dowry and jewels stating disgustedly that Suresh was not a man, thus inflicting mental hurt as well on the poor man.

Jeetendra Daphtary, an electronics engineer, met Dina Patel, a charming Central Excise employee at Shobha's urging. Both were reluctant to meet people as disabled as themselves. After meeting each other however, both

Continued on page 50

Shobha Kanvinde at her marriage bureau.

THE LITTLE WOMAN

by Don Tobin

BUST: 36 ....WAIST: 32 ... HIPS: 37 ...
MIRACLE FIGURE CONTROL CENTER
LOSE INCHES WHILE YOU WAIT
NOW DRINK THIS MAGIC COLA AND LET'S SEE WHAT HAPPENS -
THERE WE ARE! BUST: 32... WAIST: 28... HIPS: 33..!
!
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! YOU DRANK A GLASS OF COLA AND ALL YOUR MEASUREMENTS WERE REDUCED BY FOUR INCHES!
IT'S TRUE -
THAT'S AMAZING! HOW DOES HE DO IT ?
HE USES AN ELASTIC TAPE MEASURE -
?
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THE LITTLE WOMAN

Curpid Dhor, proprietor of the Blood & Thunder Saloon, walked in one morning to find a stranger writhing on the floor. "What's this?" he demanded of the bartender.

"I dunno, Chief," answered the bar-keeper, "all I can say is this here critter just come in here and says, 'gimme whisky — I want it bad.' So I gave him the worst damn stuff: in the house."

Report from a country paper on a local romance: ".... and the couple were married last Tuesday, thus ending a friendship which began in their schooldays."

Usha: "Why do you now bring me artificial flowers?"

Anand: "Because fresh flowers usually die while I'm waiting for you."

A mother of eight children under eleven said, "This morning the children were so noisy that I threatened, 'The first person in this house who screams is going to get his mouth soaped'. And do you know — I can still taste the stuff."

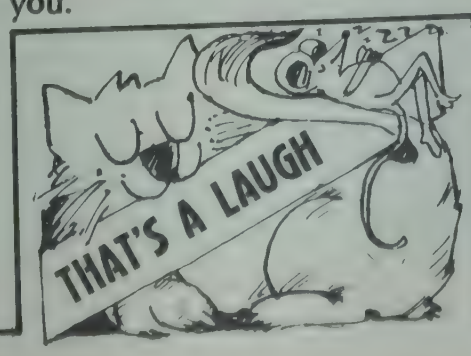
"Say, dad," asked Junior looking up from his history book, "who was it who said, 'We haven't begun to fight yet?'"
"I'm not sure, son," answered father, "but it must have been a couple on the first day of their honeymoon."

A junk shop near a railway crossing carries a sign with this hint to motorists:
"Go ahead, take a chance.
We'll buy the car."

Father: "Yes, son, I'm a self-made man."
Son: "That's what I like about you, dad. You take the blame for everything."

"I'm sorry I ever became your wife," she said bitterly.

"Oh," he flung back, "you were no young bird when I married you."
"No," she retorted, "but considering what I got I was an early bird."



"What's up? Did she turn you down?"
"She has."

"Tough luck, old man — but don't take it to heart too much.

A woman's 'no' often means 'yes'."
She didn't say 'no' — she said 'Nuts'."

Compiled by George Fegradoe.

Nagesh keeps you in elegant shape

From the house of Nagesh Knitters, latest trendsetting woollen Knitwears in vibrant colours. Keep warm in exciting pure woollen fashions this winter.

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Easily washable

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STERLING CARPETS

Facing a physical affliction with courage and making the best of life in spite of it is not the easiest thing in the world. True accounts of heroism in real life.

INDEPENDENCE FOR THE DISABLED

The life story of young Mr. Satish Malik is a real saga of courage and determination. Stricken by polio which affected both his legs and left arm at the age of one and a half years, he has never given way to despair or acquired a defeatist attitude. "I have never had an inferiority complex and I have never regarded myself as second to anyone," he says with a smile.

"I had a difficult childhood as I always had to use two clippers and a crutch. In fact, I have never in my life been without these aids. Most of my childhood was spent going from one hospital to another and taking doses of pills every day. But I have found people very helpful and cooperative. Most of the time they have gone out of their way to help me," he said. "Even in school my friends were forever willing to help me with my books and play the games which I could enjoy with them. But I would not have been able to achieve success in anything had it not been for my parents and brothers. They encouraged and helped me at every step. My parents in fact treated me like my normal brothers and sisters. Though I did sometimes get extra attention and special care, I was never made to feel a permanent cripple. Their affection and understanding gave me confidence and a desire to prove to them that I could be independent and achieve something on my own."

Satish now runs a general store in a posh colony of South Delhi and is the general secretary of the Handicapped Welfare Federation, New Delhi. A graduate in Commerce from Delhi University, Satish moves around in his own self-designed hand-driven mini-jeep and is forever willing to help handicapped people to get jobs or to design their own vehicles.

Satish, who had to undergo five operations and perform various exercises, is now mobile with one clipper and a stick. "But it is my jeep which has really given me such a lot of mobility. It was in fact the happiest day of my life when I took my invention on the road and found that it worked successfully," he said with pride. "Ever since I joined college I had wanted to make something like this. I even got some pamphlets from abroad to help me design my own vehicle. But nothing seemed practical. Then one day I happened to meet a mechanic who promised to make my dream come true. I spent at least four months sitting every day with him and explaining to him what I wanted. In this venture of mine, my brother helped me a lot. He gave me money to buy the various parts and would also leave me in the workshop everyday and then pick me up from there. My patience and efforts paid off and I ultimately got what I wanted.

"The jeep was ready in 1974 and cost me about Rs. 13,000 then. It took me quite some time to get a licence for it, but it was just a minor problem. Most of the time, the concerned officials were very helpful and friendly. Now I do not even have to pay road tax on it as my jeep comes under 'disable vehicle' category. I myself have become quite an expert mechanic now and have recently helped two of my handicapped friends in changing their Fiat cars into hand-operated ones. Actually I enjoy doing this kind of work, but I do not get enough time."

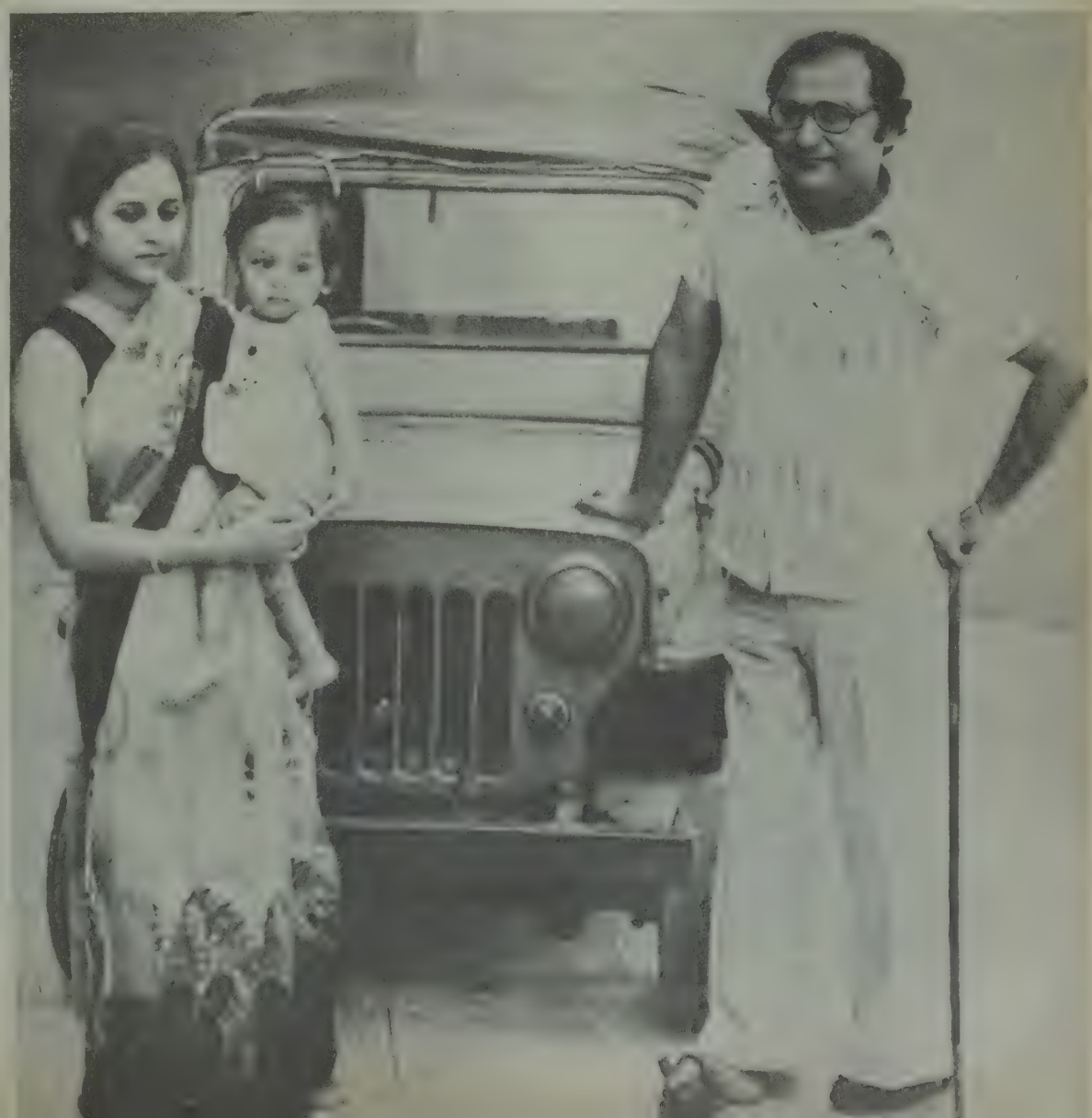
He has been married for two and a half years and has a perfectly normal one-year old son. His wife is a spastic and he says that he deliberately chose a handicapped wife as "a normal woman may have created complexes in my life. She may have thought that she was doing me a favour by marrying me and would have then probably regretted it all her life. Now I am happy to have a wife who regards me as her equal and we have a mutual regard and understanding for each other's problems," said Satish.

"To begin with," he explained, "I had certain reservations about getting married because of my disability. But my friends and my family members persuaded me and their arguments changed my mind. Mostly it was my mother who was very keen to see me settled happily. She said that I must have some one to look after me in my old age and care for me."

Satish spends a lot of his free time in organising the activities of his Federation. He wants to see all the handicapped people settled well in life. The money collected by the Federation is spent on educating handicapped children and providing such people with prosthesis and mobility aids to make their life more comfortable.

"I hate to see disabled people give way to despair," said Satish wistfully. "One must have a healthy attitude towards one's disability. Self-pity makes a person weak. I encourage disabled people to be independent and I tell them that they are as competent as normal people." Giving his own example, he continued, "I am certainly not dependent on anyone. What does it matter if I cannot stand and work? I can do equally good work while sitting. And I am very frank about my handicap and have no inhibitions in asking people for help. And they have never refused me anything."

Jyotsana Kapoor



When you want to be trendy

wear a spot of tradition.

Smooth-as-silk hair flowing
in the breeze, a hunk of
silver jingling merrily and
a spot of Shingar Kumkum
dancing on your forehead.
Can anyone else look
as beautifully 'in'?
Made from the finest
ingredients in colours that
blend with your every mood,
colours you ever dream.

Shingar Kumkum Bindi - India's most Inspiring Beauty spot.

The right to safety, the right to choose, the right to be informed and the right to be heard are the fundamental rights of every consumer.

PENANG'S SUCCESSFUL CONSUMER ACTIVISTS

Krishna Basrur

Penang Island, the famous "Pearl of the Orient" is truly a Garden of Eden. Lush groves of coconut, banana, rubber and palm trees cover the rolling slopes of the island leading down to beaches where the sea, an exquisite and incredible pale green, laps at the white sand. Forming a perfect back drop to all this beauty rise blue-green hills, their tops wreathed with misty drifts of cloud in this season of sudden, light showers. Hidden somewhere in the mist is a fairy tale pagoda, a Buddhist temple, its fine craftsmanship expressing in every detail the love and veneration with which it was built.

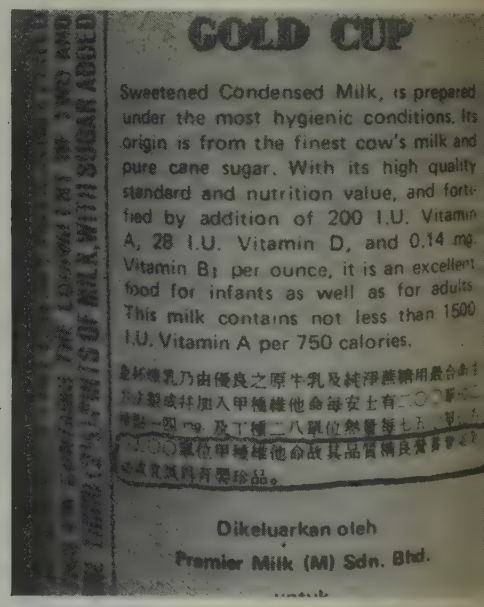
But even Eden had a snake and the consumers of this island paradise have mundane problems — consumer problem — just like all the rest of us. Snoddy goods, short weighting adulteration of food which appear to be a fairly serious problem judging by the vivid dyes to be found on chicken, sweets and in tea, mail order frauds and all the other familiar business malpractices plague the consumer here also. Environmental depredations in the name of "progress" are taking their toll of the island's forests polluting its once beautiful harbours and depriving its fishermen and boat builders, skilled practitioners of a thousand-year old craft, of their livelihood.

Fortunately, Penang consumers are not taking all this lying down, for Penang has a strong consumer movement. The Consumers' Association of Penang (CAP) often described as the fastest growing organisation in the Third World, has developed in the short space of ten years into an influential body with 45,000 subscribers for its magazine "Utusan Consumer", about 800 voting members, a spacious and well-appointed bungalow for an office, a small but well-organised library presided over by a retired librarian of the University Library, a weekly radio feature "Calling All Consumers", a regular newspaper column, "Consumer Platform' and a reputation for keeping the official consumer agencies on their toes.

How did all this activity get started? Anwar Fazal, the young (39) and dynamic President of the International Organisation of Consumer Unions, the first Asian to hold this office, was one of the founders of CAP. In 1969, he reminisced, he was in charge of the Penang Municipal Library and used to organise periodical talks and book exhibitions on specific topics to familiarise the public with the world of books. These became a big draw. At this time the newly formed Selangor Consumers' Association had organised a couple of strikingly successful campaigns, and Anwar, deeply interested in Consumerism, invited the President of the Association to give a talk in Penang. The President gladly agreed, but suggested, "Why don't you start your own organisation in Penang?" The idea clicked and at the very first meeting held to suggest the need for a consumer organisation one hundred and fifty consumers enrolled themselves. "We never looked back after that," said Anwar. He invited Encik Mohomed Idris, Chairman of the Library and a former Municipal Councillor whose calibre he knew, to be President of the new group. This was and continues to be a most fruitful association.

Encik Mohomed Idris, the guiding spirit of the organisation, is a Malaysian of Indian descent who originally came from Ramnad in South India.

Testing of consumer goods by CAP member.


GOLD CUP
Sweetened Condensed Milk, is prepared under the most hygienic conditions. Its origin is from the finest cow's milk and pure cane sugar. With its high quality standard and nutrition value, and fortified by addition of 200 I.U. Vitamin A, 28 I.U. Vitamin D, and 0.14 mg Vitamin B1 per ounce, it is an excellent food for infants as well as for adults. This milk contains not less than 1500 I.U. Vitamin A per 750 calories.
Dikeluarkan oleh
Premier Milk (M) Sdn. Bhd.

Misleading advertising: the label says that condensed milk is excellent for infants.

LEFT: CAP campaigned against dumping of industrial waste in the Juru river which threatened the livelihood of the fishermen of Kuala Juru village.

Encik Idris has a rather retiring and shy manner at first, at least with women, but his incisive and enquiring mind soon takes over. Instead of answering questions he was soon shooting questions at me about the state of consumer organisations in India, what government is doing for the consumer, and whether

PENANG'S SUCCESSFUL CONSUMER ACTIVISTS.

laws are implemented efficiently. He stressed the vital importance of finding out the facts and conveying them to consumers. Consumer research and consumer education are the two activities essential for consumer organisation, he feels, especially for influencing government policies.

Like most consumer organisations, CAP, a non-profit organisation, is supported by members and readers' subscriptions and occasional government grants. No advertising or commercial donations are accepted.

CAP has been opposing a pet government project because of the consequences it will have for the poor people of the area. Did he really hope to succeed? "Why not? We have to keep trying," he said, and it was obvious that he was not the one to give up easily.

CAP involves itself in consumer problems ranging from the complaints of the individual consumer to national issues like the energy crisis, environmental pollution, public health services and general deterioration in the quality of life. It has been instrumental in exposing many health hazards. Rodamine B, a prohibited dye, was found in balchow, a prawn paste popular with Malaysians. The resulting hullabaloo in the press started by CAP had lasting result. Today balchow packets carry the warranty "Contains no Roadamine B".

Tests carried out by CAP on 12 brands of coffee showed that all of them had less than 50 per cent coffee, the legal minimum. One sample contained only 5 per cent coffee. The rest was wheat flour, ground coconut shell and grain!

CAP has from time to time exposed short weight in 30-kg bags of rice, "all beef" sausages which were made of pork, spurious Johnson and Johnson baby powder tins filled with perfumed flour, tablets stamped "Panodoi" to hoodwink the unwary or illiterate consumer into buying them as "Panadol", prohibited drugs and pesticides and hazardous appliances which had been recalled by government order in the West and then dumped on unsuspecting Third World countries by unscrupulous exporters.

When existing consumer laws are slackly implemented, only persistent consumer action can save the day. CAP found that 11 brands of soy sauce contained only about half the quantity mandatorily marked on the label. In September 1977 CAP found that the weight of loaves of bread did not conform to the Government standard and complained to the Weights and Measures Department. The bakeries agreed to conform. But in February 1979, CAP found them again giving short weight.

CAP complains that public health legislation is inadequate. There are no bacteriological standards, the food inspection system is minimal, no legislation covers the shelf life of canned goods, and the Government has set standards for a few heavy metals, but none for pesticides or other chemicals.

Does the above have a familiar ring? We have no standards for pesticides in fish and vegetables either though both are contaminated.

Consumer awareness and pressure are all important in getting action. To strengthen consumer awareness at every level and to build up a whole new generation of young consumers who would have a critical awareness of the realities of the market place and grow up into discriminating users of goods and services, CAP is guiding 30 student consumer groups in high schools through consumer projects, research and surveys. CAP has also devised a course in consumer and environmental education for teachers in colleges.

In 1979 CAP introduced a paper in the national language for rural consumers at whom much of its educational effort is directed.

To inform and educate adult consumers, CAP produces a weekly broadcast in four languages. Within a simple conversational format, these give valuable information on misleading advertisements, smoking hazards, baby foods, child safety, pawn shops, precautions to be observed when buying a house, cosmetics, harmful junk foods and a variety of such important topics.

"Consumer Platform", a short article enlivened by cartoons called "CAPTOONS", is published regularly in the "Star".

In common with many other consumer organisations in the world, CAP's concern for consumers goes far beyond the narrow objective of ensuring "Value for their Money." It is seriously concerned about the quality of their life, about preserving the purity of their environment, often jeopardised by indiscriminate and unplanned industrial expansion, about the socio-economic consequences of their consumption patterns. As Anwar Fazal stresses, the Consumer Eyes must be trained to view a product from every aspect, and ask itself, who produces it? How is it produced? Who benefits by its sale? Can anyone be harmed by it? What socio-economic consequences can its production and sale have? Does it displace useful local products? Is it produced by methods which subject workers to serious hazards or exploitation?

Over the years, CAP's trained Consumer Eyes has become increasingly concerned with the socio-economic problems of consumption. It has campaigned against dumping of industrial waste into the Juru river to help fishermen of Kuala Juru village whose livelihood was threatened. In fact, CAP predicts that if pollution continues at the present rate, Malaysia, once so rich in fisheries, will soon be importing fish and thousands of fishermen will be out of work.

CAP has also taken up arms against a new and, in its view, superfluous, foreshore road which has blocked access to the sea for a colony of skilled boat builders.

Recently CAP organised a week-long seminar on health at which 100 speakers discussed Malaysia's public health system pointing out that it was not reaching those for whom it was meant. Participants revealed that 35 per cent of children are malnourished in a country where food is abundant. 120,000 of Malaysia's 13 million people suffer from filariasis and 18 per cent were liable to malaria as a result of inadequate mosquito control. The seminar also highlighted the fact that Government had reduced its allocations for health from 6.7 per cent in 1960-70 to 1.8 per cent in the plan for 1976-80.

These are big issues. Though success may not come easily, by hammering away at such vital issues, so important to consumer welfare, CAP has enhanced its reputation in the community, where it is described as "the nation's most effective consumer watchdog."

Consumers in other developing countries can learn much from this outstandingly successful attempt at consumer organisation in the Third World.

FOR ROUND THE YEAR RELIEF
THE SEASON FOR FRESH GROUNDNUT OIL HAS SET IN
SAURASHTRA'S
OLYMPIC
REFINED GROUNDNUT OIL
NOW IS THE TIME TO BUY IT.
Ravnit/2/2/80
OLYMPIC
OLYMPIC Refined Groundnut Oil-crushed fresh only from the nutritious groundnuts of Saurashtra's fertile land.
Best for domestic use
OLYMPIC Refined Groundnut Oil enjoying the highest sale. Don't wait for a moment. Buy it today. For the whole year. New Season's fresh OLYMPIC Refined Groundnut Oil from Saurashtra.
Manufacturer:
SANJAY OIL CAKE INDUSTRIES
Jamnagar (Saurashtra)
SAURASHTRA'S OLYMPIC REFINED GROUNDNUT OIL IS NOW AVAILABLE IN 5 KG. TIN ALSO.

NO CURE FOR HICCUPS!

An eminent physician, Dr. Charles Mayo, once wrote, "Perhaps one is justified in saying that there is no disease which has had more forms of treatment and fewer results from treatment. . ." No, he was not referring to cancer, leukaemia or even the common cold. He was thinking of hiccups.

Although science knows exactly what causes hiccups, a good deal of research into the subject has so far failed to find out why some people hiccup and others don't, why you get two or three bouts one week and none the next.

Sometimes, of course, the attacks cease within a few minutes. Sipping or drinking water may relieve the unhappy condition of the stomach lining. Frequently, though, the hiccups persist for much longer, and then the home-made remedies are brought into action. Gargling with water is probably the most effective. Counting up to 100 (or 1000 if that fails) probably the least.

Down the centuries otherwise normal people have tried (and frequently sworn by) such amazing hiccup "cures" as drinking water from two glasses at once; clutching the lobe of one ear whilst spinning around on the floor; applying cold — or hot — metal objects to the back of the neck; having another non-hiccuping person bounce up and down on your stomach; drinking water from the far side of a tumbler whilst revolving the body in a circle; holding the nose whilst swallowing; wishing on a teacup; pressing on the upper lip; standing on one's head, preferably holding one's breath at the same time; breathing deeply in and out; and "freezing" the ears while swallowing.

But what kind of cure can twentieth century medical science offer? Surprisingly little, actually, with the paper-bag method of hiccup first-aid receiving most support. According to Dr. Roland K. Wright, "The most popular and frequently beneficial rule-of-thumb cure for hiccups is the oxygen-dissipation or 'paper bag' cure. The subject covers his head (or his nose and mouth) with a paper bag and re-breathes the carbon dioxide exhausted from his lungs. This has a sound scientific basis, inasmuch as it relaxes the nerves and muscles by cutting down the supply of oxygen in the bloodstream."

"A danger in this home remedy, when self-administered," warns Dr. Wright, "is that you may faint from lack of oxygen. It is much safer to have a physician apply the same principle by placing a mask over your face and having you breathe a mixture of carbon doxide and oxygen." And of course, such hiccup treatment should **never** be attempted with a polythene or plastic bag.

Otherwise, modern medicine offers little consolation to the casual hiccuper beyond advising patience. With the persistent hiccuper, doctors today try to find the root cause of the ceaseless hiccuping. This may lie in the stomach, in the diaphragm itself, along any part of the phrenic nerve, or in the brain itself. Or the reason for hiccuping may not be physical at all, but purely emotional. Hysterical hiccuping is not uncommon, and often needs to be cured by suggestion and psychological guidance.

In extreme cases, continual hiccups lasting for days, months and even years may completely baffle doctors, and instances are on record of unfortunate people hiccuping until they died.

The longest known attack of hiccups was that endured by poor Jack O'Leary, a Californian, who hiccuped more than 160 **million** times between June 1948 and June 1956, during which time his weight dropped by 4 stones to only 5 stones 4 lb. Well-wishers sent him 60,000 suggestions for curing his terrible attack, but only one appeared to do the trick — a prayer to St. Jude, patron saint of lost causes.

Many other people have hiccuped for periods of weeks or months, one a policeman named Edward O'Connor, starting his six-month fatal attack merely by laughing at another copper's joke. There is even some evidence of the "infectiousness" of hiccuping, as with yawning, and there has been recorded more than one actual epidemic of the trouble.

Fortunately for most of us, an attack of hiccups is of short duration, and we have to learn to live with it until medical science finds a way to deal with the errant phrenic nerve.

David Gunston

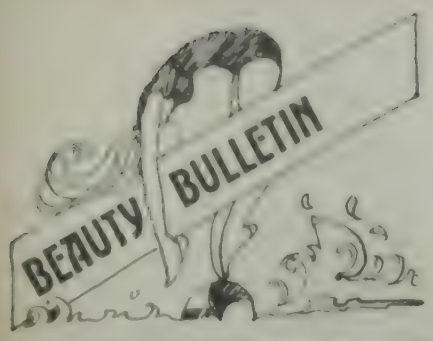
eve Week

Quiz: NEW SERIES No. 18

"HEGMAN"

1. On December 8, a famous musician was shot dead by a crazy fan. His name please, and also the name of his Japanese born wife.
2. Which renowned painter collaborated with film maker Luis Bunel in making the surrealistic films "Un Chien Andalov" and "L'Age d'Or"?
3. Name the trophy for which British and American women' lawn tennis teams compete annually.
4. Name the eminent US general nominated as US Secretary of State by Mr. Ronald Reagan.
5. On which part of your person would you be most likely to use an emery board?
6. With what town do you associate the Pied Piper?
7. Which is the only living bird with two toes?
8. Name the Indian ambassador to Canada.
9. Sherman and Churchill were leaders, they are also names of a weapon of war. What is that weapon?
10. Who wrote "Candia" and "Candide"?
11. Name the winner of the 1952 Nobel prize for Peace.
12. Who created the comic strip character Snoopy?

A prize of Rs. 200 will be given to the reader who sends in the all-correct solution. If more than one do so, the prize money will be divided among them. The deadline for the answers is 29th January 1981. Every entry must be accompanied by a cutting of this column.



Kiyoko M., a leading beautician, will answer your beauty queries every fortnight in this column.

TOO SHINY FACE

SHE IS SHORT

I am a college going girl of 16. I am thin and short. My hair is short with a side part and it is flat at the top. I want to look taller. Any suggestions for me?

P. C. (Bombay)

You are still young and will grow, so don't be discouraged. You can add weight by following the right diet.

In clothing simple, uncluttered lines will make you appear taller. Vertical stripes and solid colours will help you to look taller. Avoid bright, large prints and contrasting colours.

A simple style with fullness at the crown will seemingly add height.

AVOID EXCESSIVE MOISTURISER

I have recently started using moisturiser before applying foundation. But by doing this my face becomes too shiny.

Also my lips become chapped in winter, what should I do?

D.J. (Delhi)

Do not use moisturiser in excess. Just dot a little on the forehead, nose, cheeks and chin and spread evenly and lightly. By doing this you will not dilute your foundation or have a too shiny face.

Use a little petroleum jelly or a chapstick available on the market for chapped lips.

FOLLOW THESE TIPS

I am a 38-year old housewife and have always been beauty conscious. Now I am worried because my skin has become dry and I have lines at the corners of my mouth. I have added a little weight too.

R.R.H. (Pune)

Dry skin lacks moisture therefore it should be nourished to keep it soft and supple. Use a skin food and a moisturiser regularly. Massage your face gently with a good cream. Using both your hands, using upward movements, smooth the cream into your skin. Leave it on for 15-20 minutes till it is absorbed. Tissue excess. Then rinse well. Apply cream on hands and legs too.

Include milk, eggs, leafy green vegetables in your diet which provide vitamin A so essential for the skin.

Here are some facial exercises to make the lines round the mouth less noticeable. Purse your lips as if to whistle and hold for a count of five. Relax. Repeat 10 times.

Watch your diet too because extra weight tends to creep in at this age. Have a diet devoid of carbohydrates, greasy, fattening food but include high-protein food. Plenty of fresh air and regular exercises will also help.

TRY THESE EXERCISES

I am 27 and have a slightly protruding tummy. Also my chinline has become flabby. Please suggest some exercises.

S.R. (Bangalore)

Try these exercises and do them regularly.

To flattern tummy: Stand straight with hands on your hips. Pull in tummy muscles as tightly as you can, as if trying to touch the backbone with your stomach. Hold for a count of 10. Relax and repeat 5 times.

For a firmer chinline: Open your mouth as wide as possible, thrusting lower lip out and up, try to touch your nose. Do 10 times.

THE SPECIAL FRIENDSHIP OF THE DISABLED

Continued from page 42

were surprised that their mental images of a "handicapped partner," were conventionally unrealistic! "Shobha, never in my wildest dreams did I think that I would meet so dashing a suitor," exclaimed Dina. Jeetendra manufactures a combination lock and burglar alarm for cars under the trade name of Auto Sales. He plans to visit Japan after getting married to Dina for the 1981 Olympics for the Disabled to take part in the Talent Contest.

Even physically handicapped people, however, have reservations about marrying people who are blind, deaf or dumb. Problems of the latter are unique. Surprisingly, the blind and deaf prefer to marry people with similar disabilities.

Mahesh, a deaf mute, found it well nigh impossible to marry a normal girl. His mother recoiled at the thought of marriage for her son. However, after meeting several deaf girls, at the India Deaf Society at Charni Road, he persuaded his mother to let him marry a deaf mute like himself from his own caste. Fortunately, his mother realised it was important to fulfil his normal desire for marriage, if he was not to seek relief in bad company.

"Marrying a handicapped person is certainly no worse than marrying a person who possesses the crippling handicaps of anger, jealousy and the like," says Madhuri who is happily married to a blind doctor of sociology.

What is not easily understood by the average normal person is that the blind person relies almost totally on tactile sensation to tell him about the outside world. Little things like keeping household objects such as masala dabbas back in exactly the same place after use makes enormous difference to their lives. Understanding these seeming eccentricities takes effort for normal people, which can be irritating to a blind partner. Marrying a blind person therefore requires tremendous understanding of the very special problems of the sightless. Moreover, many blind people have only a hazy concept of the human anatomy since words are poor substitutes for vision.

Pallavi's marriage is an outstanding example of how a normal beautiful girl can be happy married to a handicapped. She has married Dilip Poudvale, a polio victim afflicted in the legs. Pallavi wanted to marry a sportsman who could also provide her a good life. Dilip, who has represented India at international paraplegics sports meets, is an expert swimmer, archer, and table tennis player. Son of noted Marathi stage actress Vasundara Poudvale, Dilip was encouraged to take part in as many activities as possible and Pallavi was struck by his outgoing personality, and even today is hardly aware of his handicap. "It makes no difference to our married life," she says. Dilip is the owner of Dilip Car Travels, which rents out tourist cars. Unlike orthodox Indian husbands, he encourages his wife to leave the kitchen to help him run the company. However, he says ruefully that he has not been very successful in getting more normal people to marry handicapped persons.

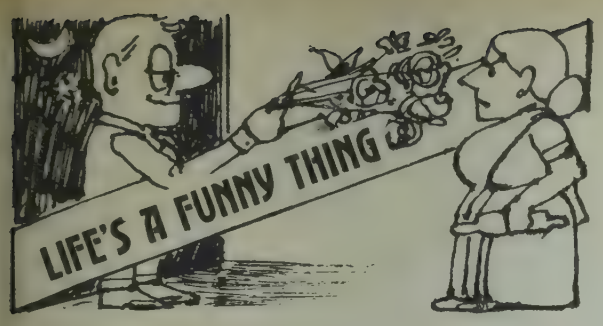
India, unlike advanced countries like Sweden, does not have large-scale well-organised bodies that specialise in catering to the emotional needs of the handicapped. Spastics there have special apartments with well-trained, sympathetic nurses to help position couples to make love should the need arise. This advanced outlook may horrify the average Indian, but the need for emotional rehabilitation of the handicapped has to be met by organisations outside of the family, which until now has not adequately coped with the special needs of the disabled.

Shobha Kanvinde has lit the torch for emotional rehabilitation.

Her marriage bureau is flooded with enquiries, some even from far off Hubli and Chandigarh. At a special meeting of the handicapped on New Year, at Shivaji Park, when Chief Minister Antulay presided, Shobha said that until now society has treated the handicapped as its poor relatives. She hoped that 1981, the Year of the Disabled, would "start ringing the bell of hope for the disabled, and that it would never stop ringing in the years to come."

Forms for the marriage bureau can be had by writing to:

Marriage Bureau for the Physically Handicapped,
Sane Guruji Vidyalaya Library,
Bikoba Patare Marg,
Shivaji Park, Bombay-28.



A spoonful of humour to make the medicine go down

I think it was Somerset Maugham who said, "In every man, woman and thinking child the seed of egotism lies waiting to germinate." This is true of me too. So excuse me if this column is about myself.

I thank my lucky stars that I am absolutely gifted. With a good memory. Imagine what life would be without a memory?

When I was four years old, my uncle threw me in the air and failed to catch me. If you could see my nose, you'd know where I fell. But I've forgiven, because in school I boasted that I got that nose in a fist fight and bullies left me severely alone. I remember my teacher, Miss Hart, in one class. Every boy in the class was in love with her because she was sensational. Many fathers were too. Mothers hated her guts.

I remember acquiring a dog at six. He was half a German Sausage and half heaven-knows-what. He loved piano legs. Always trying to grow plants on them. But my mother was scared stiff of him because he used to kill rats and lay them, worshipfully, at her feet. One day I got home to find her quivering on a table top. On the floor, Chipsy sat, thumping his tail and in front of him was the biggest rat this side of a Kerala harvest.

At seven I had my first steady girl friend. Her name was Rita and she had braces on her teeth. We used to build sand castles together without any uppers on. The lowers our parents insisted we wear. I proposed marriage to her without knowing the difference between marriage and a tango. She accepted, but it didn't work out. When she really grew serious about me, her parents moved house.

Then there was a maths teacher I hated like I hate epsom salts. I used to deflate his car tyres regularly and, since he wore a wig, I'd put gum into his solar topi at every opportunity. The results were hilarious, but he didn't think so.

But then, I hated maths too. I couldn't understand that Hari, Ram and Pilloo — who could dig a six foot ditch in three days — could dig the same ditch if Hari was watching a football match. But the maths teacher really didn't worry me. That's because my dad was a man with a temper like a powder keg with a short fuse. Parents can be a comfort — sometimes.

My parents used to throw parties on my birthdays. About 20 of my friends used to attend, laden with gifts. We'd eat like sailors at a charity dinner. Songs would be sung — mostly in falsetto. Games would be played, but the highlight I remember after all these years was, at one party, when some bright lad set fire to a cracker under Granny's chair. Her false teeth landed fourteen feet away.

When I started working (as a steno), my boss used to dictate at a hundred and plenty. I tried hard and my progress was good. Especially with the pretty telephone operator whose name was Pamela. I swore love to her in the lunch intervals, but she never encouraged me beyond a peck on the cheek on a day before Christmas. In time, I was promoted to the position of executive. I was given a peach of a secretary whose name was Dianne. She thought I was better than Paul Newman. I thought so myself, but didn't tell her. I'm modesty itself.

I'm on my third job now and my wandering days are over. Susie says that every man should "settle down." That's a familiar feminine phrase. I'm sure that I have, except perhaps on festive days when I have to wait until after dinner for the delights of life. My present boss speaks as if everyone around him is deaf and when he uses the long distance telephone, he doesn't need it. But he's just and fair and everybody forgives him, except perhaps his wife. Why should he buy her so many flowers?

But I'm not complaining. I'm trying to work harder between whiskies and even succeeding, now and then. Susie praises me anyway, but then she majored in psychology. And my kids think I'm Santa Claus, Borg and Gavaskar rolled into one. Why therefore should I complain? Maybe if someone drops dead and leaves me a fortune I'd open my own advertising agency. I love tossing words around and would write some immortal campaigns. Till then... I'll look at the sun and let the shadows look after themselves.

See you!

SUNNY

ROOPA: SPELLS SUCCESS IN THREE LANGUAGES

Continued from page 21

ginran" being made by P. Madhavan with Suman in the lead, and "Hridayam Padunnu" in Malayalam etc.

Roopa is determined to make a place for herself in Tamil films because "the roles which I am being offered are really meaty and challenging unlike Telugu films "where I am usually offered 'altu faltu' roles. I'd rather do good films in Tamil than make money doing inane films in Telugu."

Roopa did the role that Seema did in the controversial Malayalam hit "Her Nights" when it was made in Kannada. "The film flopped because I wasn't sexy. I feel uncomfortable doing sexy roles."

Unlike most of the other South Indian actresses, Roopa isn't keen on doing Hindi films because, as she put it, "doing one Hindi film isn't enough and you cannot get more than one film if you do not have a Godfather."

Roopa feels that she is lucky not to have been saddled with any image by the audience and film-makers even after "Oru Thalai Ragam" because it is difficult to create an image with just one film.

Like Rati Agnihotri, Roopa's voice also is being dubbed in Tamil by professional dubbing artistes because she has yet to master the language. "You aren't really satisfied when your voice is being dubbed by somebody else. I feel very bad about it but there's nothing I can do at this stage," Roopa said helplessly.

That Roopa has started going places in filmland is evident from the fact that all kinds of rumours have started floating about her, ranging from "Roopa is already married to one Telugu producer" to "Roopa is the mother of a kid". However Roopa is not upset by all this. She says, "to face gossip is a part of the game. After all when you set out to wage a war in the battlefield, you can't allow yourself to be brow-beaten by obstacles in your path. Can you?" she asks confidently.

A GENEROUS GESTURE

Prince Charles recently presented the Spastics Society of India with 3 Land Rover minibuses and Rs. 2 lakhs. Seen with H. R. H. are (from left) Miss Pamela Stretch, Mrs. S. Mehra, Air Chief Marshal (Retd.) O. P. Mehra, Governor, and Mrs. Mithu Chib.

At a reception held by Mr. E. Jawad, Consul General, UAE, in honour of H.E. Mr. Rashid Abdullah, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, UAE, are seen (from left) Mr. Jawad, Mrs. T. Taleyarkhan, Mr. Abdullah, Mrs. S. Mehra, Mrs. B. K. Goyal and Mrs. Agarwal.

LEFT: The "Montage series", a fascinating combination of Indian and disco music and dance, organised by ITDC has been recently introduced as a permanent feature at the Supper Club, Hotel Ashok, Delhi.

BELOW: At a Bharata Natyam recital by Rev. Fr. Francis Barboza (2nd from left) held by the Mount Carmel Society in Pune, are also seen Mrs. Leena Chowdhary, Mr. C. V. Chandrasekhar and Dr. Othmar Sachtea.

At the Zoroastrian Stree Mandal Ball held in Hyderabad, are seen (from left) Mr. Ellis, Mrs. P. Nanda, chief guest Mrs. Bilkiz Alladin, Harvest Queen, Miss Khurshid Irani, Mr. J. Parekh, Miss Zeenat Qureshi and Mrs. R. Rustomfram, President of the Mandal.

PEOPLE AND EVENTS

BOMBAY

The Managing Committee of TPS III Bandra Slum Rehabilitation Society inaugurated the Sneh Sagar Housing Colony for slum dwellers recently. Air Chief Marshal O. P. Mehra (Retd) P.V.S.M. Governor of Maharashtra, inaugurated the function which was presided over by Mr. Ramrao Adik, Minister of Finance & Urban Development, Maharashtra. The chief guest, Mr. Jakob Schoen, Counsellor, Royal Netherlands Embassy, New Delhi, presented the occupants the keys of the new flats. Mr. J. W. Jansen, Consul General of the Netherlands, Bombay, graced the occasion.

* * *

Mrs. Rati Madon presented a Bharata Natyam Arangetram of her pupils, Prianjali D'Costa, Maneesha Chavan, Beverley Baptista and Kiran Valecha in Bandra. Miss Luku Sanyal, T.V. personality, graced the occasion and presided over the function.

* * *

An exhibition of paintings by Madhav Satwalekar was held at the Taj Art Gallery. The artist, who studied art in Europe, — Italy and London, founded the Indian Art Institute, Bombay in 1954.

* * *

An exhibition of paintings by V.V. Godkar was held at Jehangir Art Gallery recently. Dr. Sudhakar Sane, Deputy Coroner of Greater Bombay, was the chief guest.

* * *

A special convocation was held by the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan to confer the Bhavan's Honorary Membership on the President of India, Mr. Neelam Sanjiva Reddy, at the Bhavan's Kanji Khetsey Sabhagriha. The Governor of Maharashtra, Air Chief Marshal, O. P. Mehra (Retd.) presided over the function. Prof. Ram Joshi, Vice-Chancellor, Bombay University, gave the vote of thanks.

* * *

Mr. Ramkrishna Bajaj, President, Indo-Japanese Association and members of the Managing Council held an exhibition of Japanese Calendars 1981, at Coomarswamy Hall. Mr. S. Horino, Consul-General for Japan, inaugurated the exhibition.

DELHI

The "Miss Airline 1980" contest was organised by the Airline Club of Delhi, on the occasion of their Annual Ball at the Oberoi Intercontinental Hotel. Nandita Rattan of British Airways was selected the winner with Lynette Lavery, as first runner-up and Jyotsna Laroiya, second runner-up. Both the runners-up also belong to British Airways. The winner and the first runner-up will participate in a Miss World Interline Beauty contest to be held in Miami in May 1981.

* * *

The Delhi Housewives Association organised an Essay and Fancy Dress Competition for schools all over Delhi. The Nehru Memorial Award function in which several children took part, was held at Imperial Hotel. The Fancy dress contest was followed by a Fashion pageant, "The Brides of India."

Mr. Zail Singh, Home Minister, was the chief guest and Kumud Ben Joshi, Dy. Minister Information and Broadcasting, presided over the function. At a function held earlier at Imperial, the Lt. Governor of Delhi, Mr Jagmohan gave away the prizes

CALCUTTA

Uday Shankar's 80th birthday celebrations were held at the Rabindra Bharati University. A new hall, named after the maestro was Inaugurated at the university. The first occupant of the chair instituted in his name was Dr. Sunil Kothari, Professor and Head of the Department of Dance.

* * *

The All India Sports Journalist Association presented a seminar on Commercial Promotion of Sports. Mr. Kishore Bhimani the Convener, explained the

Quantas Airways organised a party at Ambassador Hotel, Bombay. Seen (from left) are Mr. Zakir Chinwalla, Mrs. I. Sen, Mr. L. Lambourne, Mr. Ian Higgins, Mrs. Sabira Merchant, and Mr. Mrinal Sen.

ABOVE: Deepti Naval who won Film World's Best Actress award is flanked by Mr. Azhar Ahsan, Administrative Manager, U-Foam Ltd. (left) and Mr. Vinod Pande, Director, "Ek Bhar Phir".

A meeting was held at Hotel Sea Rock, Bombay, by the Bandra Medical Association to discuss the various factors of obesity. Seen (from left) are Mrs. Ramma Bans, Director Taj Health Club, Dr. Gaitonde, Dr. S. K. Hathi, Secretary of the Assoc., and Miss Qureshi.

RIGHT: The Uday Shankar Hall was inaugurated at Rabindra Bharati University, Calcutta. Seen (from left) are Mr. G. C. Ghosh, Anand Shankar, Amala Shankar, Mamata Shankar, Kanaklata and Dr. Sunil Kothari.

need for such a seminar where the business houses make the much needed money available for sport with their own image promotion and goodwill in mind.

Mr. C.R. Irani was the chief guest and the panellists in the symposium were Mr. Soli B. Aibara of ITC, Mr. Prafulla Goradia of NTC, Mr. Aurobindo Ray of Warren Industries, Mr. Anil Sud of Gramophone Co., Mr. Vijya Lamba of Bata India and Mr. Naresh Kumar of the Kumar Group of Industries. Special invitees were Mr. S.K. Wankhede, President, Indian Cricket Control Board, and Mr. Michael Ferreira, the World Billiards' Champion.

MADRAS

Mr. K. Vishnu Murthy Yerkadithaya, Chairman and Managing Director, Indian Overseas Bank, inaugurated the All India Finals of the Round Table Quiz Contest held at the Madras Gymkhana Club. Teams from Calcutta, Patna, Kanpur, Bangalore, Coimbatore, Hyderabad, Madras, and Trivandrum participated in the contest. The winners "Motley Crew" from Calcutta received IOB Gift Cheques worth Rs. 2000/- from the Chairman. Mr. Alban Scolt conducted the quiz.

The Round Table Quiz Contest, held on an all India basis and open to the public is the only one of its kind in the country.

* * *

A group of students from the Madras School of Social Work took up the project on tree planting in the city as a part of their field work project in the First Semester (October to December 1980).

In this connection they brought out a folder on "Green Madras Campaign," highlighting the importance of trees and various facilities available for planting trees in Governmental agencies. They have screened films and also held demonstrations on tree planting in schools and colleges with the help of Forest Utilisation Officers.

BANGALORE

Mrs. Sabitha Chandran, President, Ladies Circle International, inaugurated an exhibition of crafts organised by the Bangalore North Ladies Circle 14. All the exhibits were made by Mrs. Sudha Kanthi of Bangalore. The proceeds of the sale will be utilised for service projects of the Circle.

* * *

The International Music Society organised an enchanting children's operatta, "Kingdom of Cards" based on Rabindranath Tagore's famous work. Mrs. Kunda Patwardhan of Mysore directed the musical production, which was ably enacted by the children of the Mysore Makkala Koota.

PUNE

The Mount Carmel Society presented "Nrtyanjali" a Bharata Natyam recital by Rev. Fr. Francis Barboza and Troupe at the Nehru Memorial Hall. The show was held in aid of the Mount Carmel High School building fund.

A post-graduate in History, Fr. Francis Barboza SVD is a gifted musician and dancer and is perhaps the first to present Christian themes through Indian classical dance. Since 1978, Fr. Barboza has been giving public performances, delivering lectures on dance and writing research articles.

AGRA

Mary Stopes Society's third clinic will be opened in Agra shortly. The first one was started at Delhi and the second at Amritsar. The founder members of the Society are a group of concerned medical and non-medical persons who are committed to provide additional family planning facilities in all parts of the country, Amongst the foremost aims of the Society is the promotion and the provision of abortion services. The Society's doctors give sympathetic and compassionate relief to hundreds of women who might otherwise turn to "back street" solutions. The Agra clinic of Mary Stopes Society will be inaugurated by Mr. V.K. Saxena, Commissioner, Agra division.

FOR THE WEEK JAN. 18 — 24, 1981
John Naylor

IF IT'S YOUR BIRTHDAY THIS WEEK:

You may form a lasting and happy relationship if unattached. You may also be writing off a present friendship because the person moves away from your area. An important year for business and money matters and a complete change is possible. You will be feeling rather adventurous, in the mood to chance your luck a bit. This could pay off if you keep risks within reasonable limits, but June to September play safe. A relative who is well off may give you useful support.

ARIES
(March 22 — April 20)

A new trend in personal relationships could bring romance, if unattached. You also meet people who can be useful in your more practical aspirations. Hopes will succeed if you are prepared to put in extra effort.

TAURUS
(April 21 — May 21)

Planets now on the midheaven of your Solar chart are fortunate for you. A time to take initiatives, to watch for opportunities. In more personal matters fresh scenes will bring promising meetings.

GEMINI
(May 22 — June 21)

There is a strong accent on travel, which should bring you luck, as well as fun. There could be good news about future prospects, as well as matters already in the pipeline. Don't be intimidated by recent setbacks.

CANCER
(June 22 — July 23)

Take a cautious path in all transactions, businesswise, delay firm agreements until February if you can. Watch household expenditure; don't do things the expensive way, nor be too generous with loved ones.

LEO
(July 24 — Aug 23)

Strenuous conditions will prevail and the support of companions will be lacking. Extra responsibilities may be pushed on to you, temporarily. However, problems and irritations will sort out several unsatisfactory conditions.

VIRGO
(Aug 24 — Sept 23)

Your stars suggest service to others this week. You will be helping out someone in need. It is clear that any extra effort put in will bring rewards sooner or later. A promising time for romance and the social scene.

LIBRA
(Sept 24 — Oct 23)

Starry transits favour you. This should be a light-hearted week, also a helpful one for your more worldly aims. Friendly contacts will be lucky to you with some unexpected invitations and compliments.

SCORPIO
(Oct 24 — Nov 22)

There is a special emphasis on home and loved ones. A celebration is on the way, also an improvement in the affairs of a relative. If planning a change of residence, put out feelers. If unattached, a romantic period is about to begin.

SAGITTARIUS
(Nov 23 — Dec 22)

Keep on the move, as far as you can, for both luck and enjoyment; get into everything that's going on. There should be a pleasing response to a recent inquiry or application. A good time to improve your set-up in minor ways.

CAPRICORN
(Dec 23 — Jan 20)

Venus is in your sign and favours you. Your more practical affairs are progressing well. A period of carefree activity and a happy sociable atmosphere, if single. Look out for some money-making opportunities.

AQUARIUS
(Jan 21 — Feb 19)

Fortunate trends in most spheres of activity, and the initiative you take pays off. You meet people with similar tastes and interests as yourself. But life is busy, could be strenuous soon, so keep abreast of tasks.

PISCES
(Feb 20 — March 21)

Changes are coming along which will have a beneficial effect on your affairs and fortunes. However, this week favours getting plans and ambitions into shape, rather than entering impulsively into new agreements.

WOMEN'S HEALTH: THE SEXIST BIAS IN MEDICINE

Continued from page 39

In recent years new and supposedly "ap propriate" innovations in health care have been proposed which necessitate new practices in health care. Can this new approach benefit women? It proposes that primary health care be made the responsibility of the people. While this sounds attractive, if introduced within the present social structure, it can worsen women's status. Typically, within a household, "caring" is automatically relegated to the sphere of domestic chores which are a woman's responsibility. The new approach would result in increasing the domestic burden of women by making health care their responsibility. In the absence of a change in the sex typing of jobs in society, slogans of "people's health in the people's hands" can easily come to mean "family health, a woman's responsibility." Efficient institutional health care patterns do possess certain advantages which we cannot ignore.

Another alternative programme that is being proposed is the Child-to-Child programme. Its philosophy is that if children who look after younger sisters and brothers are taught sound practice of child care, the most important problems of child health may be solved. While its advantages are no doubt many, it justifies the absence of proper child care facilities and legitimises the practice of burdening children prematurely with adult responsibilities. Moreover, it is known that most of these young parent substitutes are girls. Thus the programme subtly underlines and re-emphasises the predestined role of girls in society — that of being mothers.

Weaning foods such as cereal mixes produced by multinationals have also come in for their share of criticism. While there can be no doubt about the exploitative nature of multinationals producing and marketing baby foods in countries like ours, women must examine the alternatives proposed. The trend has been to encourage women to use home produced traditional food rather than tinned products. The fact that the latter make extra demands on the already overburdened mother's time and energy resources is never mentioned. The real alternatives could be in terms of creating the pre-conditions for the setting up of neighbourhood food co-operatives.

We cannot now doubt that sexist ideology influences the goals and directions of health care practices, resulting in the deteriorating health status of women in most parts of the world. We must learn to recognise the ideological nature of medical theory and health care practices, both new and old, and exercise our health rights as women and as people.

Based on a paper presented at the National Conference on "A Perspective for a Women's Liberation Movement in India" held in Bombay in November, 1980.

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